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## Book links Iran to New York bombing

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Iran was responsible for the bombing of the World Trade Centre in New York in February, according to a new book by the director of a congressional task force on terrorism. The January 1993 book, "The World Trade Centre Bombing: A Report to Congress," written by the House Republican Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare, Mr. Bodansky wrote the CIA attack was carried out by Mir Aimal Kansi, who had been trained by Tehran and sent to the United States to launch a holy war. Authorities have identified Kansi as a suspect in the CIA bombing and is believed to have fled to Pakistan, according to officials. Tehran was also behind the bombing of the New York World Trade Centre in February in which six people were killed and 1,000 injured, Mr. Bodansky said. A spokesman for the Federal Bureau of Investigation told the Washington Post that so far investigations into the theory, "That's not to say anything may not develop down the road, but as of today, we have no evidence that there was any state-sponsored terrorism at work in this particular situation," said Frank Scalfidi.

## Crown Prince meets with 5 envoys

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Sunday received at the Royal Court the ambassadors of Qatar, Russia, Brazil, Sudan and Burkina Faso and discussed with them relations between Jordan and their countries.

## Minister welcomes 2,000 pilgrims

SOUTH SHOUNEH (Petra) — Minister of Aqaf and Islamic Affairs Izzeddin Al Khathir Al Tamimi Sunday welcomed the first congregation of 2,000 Palestinian pilgrims, who arrived in South Shouneh on their way to Mecca and Medina to perform the Haj. Sheikh Tamimi conveyed the greetings of His Majesty King Hussein to the group and informed them that Jordanian teams will provide them with all the necessary facilities to them.

## Peres heads for India and China

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres Sunday left for India where he will make a groundbreaking visit, foreign ministry officials said. Mr. Peres, travelling via Frankfurt, Germany, will be the first Israeli foreign minister to visit New Delhi since India, a staunch supporter of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, and Israel established full diplomatic ties in January 1992 after 40 years of hostility.

## Mubarak concludes Gulf tour

RIYADH (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak Sunday concluded a tour of the Gulf Arab states during which he discussed Iran's alleged role in threats against the region and an accommodation of relations. He left Riyadh after a meeting with Saudi King Fahd and a meeting with Saudi Foreign Minister, Hassan bin Turayki, and a member of his delegation said.

## 3 detainees released from Khiam

MARIYOUN (AP) — Three Lebanese Muslim women detainees were freed from a prison in Khiam, a self-proclaimed "security zone" in South Lebanon Sunday in the second such release in five days. No explanation was given for the release, which raised to five the number of Shiite women detainees freed from the prison in Khiam.

## Guerrillas attack Israeli allies

IDON (R) — Guerrillas attacked an Israeli-backed militia position in South Lebanon Sunday, according to security sources said. They said the militia, the South Lebanon Army (SLA), fired anti-tank rockets and machineguns at hilltop Sojoud and the militia. The SLA returned fire and shelled villages in the area. The guerrillas were from Hizbullah. There was no immediate word on casualties.

## Aviv blast injures 35

TEL AVIV (R) — A gas explosion Sunday killed one person and injured 35 people in a Tel Aviv shopping complex. The explosion occurred in a shopping complex in Tel Aviv, which was a shopping complex. The explosion occurred in a shopping complex in Tel Aviv, which was a shopping complex. The explosion occurred in a shopping complex in Tel Aviv, which was a shopping complex.

## Somali congress names president

MOGADISHU (R) — A congress of self-styled Somali republicans has elected veteran politician Abdirahman Ibrahim Egal as president. Speaking by telephone from London, Mr. Omar Dohad said that Egal had replaced Abdirahman Ali, acting president of the Somali Republic in 1991. Egal had not been formally recognised by any other country.

## 4 Palestinians, 2 Israelis killed in Gaza violence

GAZA CITY, occupied Gaza Strip (Agencies) — Israeli troops shot dead two Palestinian children, including a baby, during protests Sunday on the Gaza Strip, where two Israeli merchants and two Palestinians were also killed.

The merchants died in the bloodiest anti-Israeli attack since the occupied territories were sealed in March, and the violence came three days after the conclusion of the latest round of Arab-Israeli peace talks in Washington.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) mainstream group Fatah and the rival Muslim fundamentalist Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) claimed responsibility for the attack in an unprecedented joint statement. Assaults in a passing Peugeot car opened fire on the four men near the Jewish settlement of Gush Katif in the southern beachfront district of Rafah, an army spokesman said.

Two of the victims were vegetable merchants from southern Israel and the other two were the Palestinian farmers from the Khan Yunis area of Gaza, he said.

Fatah, which supports the peace talks, and the anti-talks Hamas said that the merchants were in the army and that the attack was revenge for the army's killing of several of their members earlier this month.

The Arab victims were identified as Tawfik Zourab, 3, of Khan Yunis in Gaza, and Ziad Abu Jurab, 25, from Hebron in the West Bank.

The army has warned Israelis against travelling to the occupied territories, particularly since a closure imposed March 31 raised tensions. But some Israeli merchants take the risk to reap profits from produce they purchase in Gaza at lower prices than in Israel.

Deputy Defence Minister Mordechai Gur renewed the warning Sunday, saying that entering Gaza was "contrary to instructions from security forces."

But legally the closure bars only Palestinians from leaving Gaza and does not prevent Israelis from entering the area.

The shootings came 12 hours after four Israeli soldiers were injured by a hand grenade thrown at a military outpost in Gaza's Shati refugee camp, the army said.

Three of the soldiers were injured slightly and one received moderate injuries, said an army spokesman.

Earlier Saturday, Israeli troops shot and injured 51 Gazans during stone-throwing protests.

The Israeli deaths bring to 159 the number of Israelis killed since the uprising began in December 1987, including three since the occupied territories were closed at the end of March.

An 18-month-old Palestinian, Fares Mohammad Al Kurdi, was fatally wounded Sunday as troops fired at demonstrators in Jabalia refugee camp, Palestinian sources said.

The boy was playing on the steps of his home 200 metres away.



Israeli soldiers run past burning tyres in the Gaza City neighbourhood of Zekun (AFP photo)

## Palestinians will continue peace talks, Arafat says

TUNIS (Agencies) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat has vowed that the Palestinians will press on with the Middle East talks despite the "failure" of the latest round of negotiations in Washington.

"These negotiations are a political hurdle we are waging with determination and confidence the way the Algerians and Vietnamese committed themselves to negotiations during their (national) struggle," Mr. Arafat said here Saturday.

He was speaking at the opening here of the central council of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front (PPSF), headed by Samir Ghoshe.

The remarks carried by the PLO news agency, Wafa, came after the ninth round of talks ended Thursday without an agreement. Palestinian groups opposed to the talks again called for the PLO to abandon support for the negotiations.

Mr. Arafat vowed the Palestinian negotiators would not sell out the cause for statehood. He urged "all Palestinians to fight hand in hand until the Palestinian flag is raised over Jerusalem, the capital of Palestine."

Mr. Ghoshe approved Palestinian participation in the peace talks, Wafa said.

A rival wing of the PPSF based in Damascus last week called for the withdrawal of the Palestinians from the peace talks.

The deputy chief of the Palestinian negotiating team with Israel, Saeb Erakat, said in Amman that the Palestine Central Committee will meet soon to examine the results of the ninth round.

Speaking to reporters before heading to the Israeli-occupied territories, Dr. Erakat said the committee will "take the appropriate decision on the future of the peace process."

He said the "divide remains wide" between the Palestinian and Israeli positions, especially over a five-year interim period of self-rule in the territories.

Current Israeli proposals "exclude Jerusalem, the (Jewish) settlements and the security issue" during the self-rule period, he said.

But they include new elements, such as the "link" between the interim and final phases of the peace talks, plans for elections under international supervision, and legislative powers to be granted to the Palestinian self-ruling council.

Dr. Erakat accused Israel and the United States of breaking several promises made before the ninth round of peace talks last month.

Dr. Erakat arrived in Amman late Saturday along with two other negotiators. Other members of the team, including chief delegate Faisal Husseini and spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi, were in Tunis to brief the PLO.

Dr. Erakat said Israel failed to meet obligations outlined in a U.S.-mediated agreement that lured them back into the negotiations.

He said one was a clear timetable for the return home of 396 Palestinian expellees that Israel expelled Dec. 17.

Among other "confidence-building measures" that Israel promised but did not provide were the release of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, a halt to Israel's policy of demolishing Palestinian homes and a reduction of Israeli taxes in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, he said.

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## Demirel elected Turkish president

ANKARA (Agencies) — Turkey's parliament elected veteran Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel president Sunday, four weeks after the sudden death of his predecessor Turgut Ozal. Mr. Ozal's shadow hung over the election process because of controversy over whether Mr. Demirel — who heaped blame on the late president for meddling in politics and for wielding his powers unfairly — would end up acting in a similar way. Mr. Demirel won 344 votes in the 450-member house, securing the absolute majority needed in the first two rounds last week. "Parliament has done its duty... which is a victory for democracy," Mr. Demirel, 68, said after the televised vote. His main challenger, Kahraman Istan of the Motherland Party — which Mr. Ozal founded, received 94 votes. The weaker candidates, Lutfu Dogan of the Islamic Fundamentalism Prosperity Party, and Ismail Cem of the Social Democratic People's Republic Party took 47 and 27 votes respectively. Nineteen ballots were spoiled. Mr. Demirel was supported by his own party, which holds 182 seats, the Populist Social-Democratic Party (54 seats) and the Ultra-nationalist Nationalist Action Party (13 seats). Mr. Demirel was sworn in as president later Sunday.

## Jordan awaiting movement of Palestinian track

AMMAN (I.T.) — Dr. Arafat and Salem Majali, Jordan's negotiator in peace talks with Israel, has returned home after the ninth round of talks was that there was no progress.

Dr. Majali, who returned home Sunday, was quoted as saying by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that Jordan could move forward in its track negotiations with Israel without movement on the Palestinian Israeli track.

Three weeks of Middle East peace talks, part of a peace process which began in Madrid in November 1991, ended Thursday without agreement on the principle of Palestinian self-rule, the of the present talks, or a firm for the talks to resume.

Syria and Lebanon are part of the peace talks.

The Jordanian negotiator "adheres to Jordan's principles and the directives of Majesty King Hussein by coordinating with the Arab parties involved in the peace process, particularly on the Palestinian track of negotiations since the Palestinian issue is the crux of the Middle East conflict," Dr. Majali said.

The U.S. has fulfilled some of its promises "made prior to the resumption of the talks," Washington on April 27, Majali said.

"On the Jordanian-Israeli tracks, working groups have been formed to discuss the power issues," he noted.

But, he said, the King could not move forward with movement on Palestinian-Israeli track.

"The main Arab parties to peace talks will be meeting in Amman soon to evaluate the outcome of the ninth round of talks and adopt a unified position towards the tenth round, in participation strategy date," he said.

The ninth round of talks was delayed because of Israel's provocative actions in occupied territories which prompted the Arabs to suspend the Palestinian point of view, Arab coordination talks noted.

## Despite its shortcomings, Jordan's new press law more progressive than Arab equivalents

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The new Press and Publications Law goes into effect in Jordan today, having passed through its constitutional stages: Approval by the two houses of Parliament (after a long and heated debate), endorsement by Royal Decree and its publication in the Official Gazette, a month after the Royal Decree approving it.

The Law, which replaces a 1973 legislation, is described by officials as an unprecedented landmark in an Arab World long used to repressive curbs on the press. But critics argue that the law is not entirely compatible with the democratisation underway in Jordan.

Almost two years of work has gone into the legislation, which, according to those who helped draft it, contains elements from current constitutions in both western and Eastern countries.

Senior officials agree that the law is not perfect, but argue that it is best suited for Jordan, given the distinct socio-political environment in the country.

"We have had a long debate on the law, in the press, in Parliament and elsewhere," said Information Minister Mahmoud Sharif. "It is not an absolutely perfect piece of legislation and there may still be arguments (over its contents), but that does not change the reality that the law goes into effect Monday."

"I am very well aware of the dark and bright spots in our media," said Mr. Sharif, who himself worked as a journalist for many years.

"I believe that the new law is very progressive when compared with its equivalents elsewhere in the Arab World," he said. "It is a great step forward in democracy. In due course of time, as our democracy develops further and takes deeper roots, we could seek to plug some of the loopholes in it."

In the meantime, he said, "I hope Jordanian journalists, particularly the newcomers who have come in (to fill the requirements) of new political party newspapers, will live up to their responsibilities and respect the ethics of the profession."

The main bone of contention of journalists who criticise the law is what they see as vague definitions of sensitive terms included in it, including national security, Arab and Islamic culture and values, "national responsibility" and the Jordanian currency.

These journalists say that the ambiguity of definitions leaves the field open for the authorities to have their own interpretation and adopt action against journalists where disagreement exists.

Mr. Sharif counters such arguments by pointing out that it will not be the government but the judicial authorities who will have the final say in determining whether any journalist violated the law.

"The law actually protects



Mahmoud Al Sharif

journalists from government action" and offers them the due process of the judicial system, the minister said, referring to the provision that the executive authority has to go to court with complaints against the press before taking action or violations.

"I believe that the journalists need to protect themselves from within their ranks, particularly against those elements who may tend to abuse the freedom of press," he said.

Critics also argue that there are no provisions in the law which oblige the government to allow journalists to have access to documents which have direct relevance to public life, and the absence by itself is an infringement upon the freedom of information.

Another point raised by Jordanian journalists relates to a clause stipulating that jour-

nalists in the Kingdom would be allowed to practice the profession only if they are members of the Jordan Press Association (JPA). This is the association of the upper hand in determining who could work in the field and who could not. Critics say that this is a form of censorship against the freedom of association since it forces journalists to become members of a specific organisation.

JPA President Suleiman Qudah said the association, although it is empowered to do so, does not plan to take the clause too seriously. "We do not want to deprive anyone of the livelihood," he said. "However, we would like all journalists in Jordan to become JPA members in due course."

Perhaps the most controversial clause in the law is the one which forces journalists to reveal their source of information if called upon to do so in court of law.

Many journalists believe that officials will no longer be willing to part with information on government affairs lest it might lead to their being implicated in cases heard before courts.

While the government is offering any specific response to such criticism, it is seen relying on the very fact that the law will have under the law, in itself, a great leap forward.

(Continued on page 10)



## Iraqi marshes calm, villagers tell visitors

By Jane Arraf  
Reuters

OSHUWEI, Iraq — British parliamentarians found all quiet in the marshes, where the coalition accuses Baghdad of trying to wipe out Shi'ite rebels. Villagers at the edge of the marshes say their biggest fear is the noise of U.S. jets bombing the skies to protect them from the Iraqi government. They told opposition Labour members Tam Dalyell and George Galloway on a fact-finding mission at the weekend that the marshes were as calm as waters in which villagers fish, as they have for centuries. Baghdad has repeatedly denied lines reports and charges by ex-Iraqis of a military drive to force out tens of thousands of rebels who took refuge in the marshes in the southern part of the country close to the border with Kuwait.

One of the main things is the flying, it reads the children, said a village head, Faleh Suweilim, referring to the sonic boom of U.S. jets rattling the southern "no-fly" zone above the marshes. The British MPs said they expected to visit two Britons jailed in Iraq and would appeal to Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz for their release.

Mr. Dalyell and Mr. Galloway are the first British MPs to come to government-controlled Iraq since the Gulf war, which both opposed.

"It was discussed before we came, we continued to make inquiries and we think we will be able to see the prisoners tomorrow (Sunday)," Mr. Galloway told Reuters while visiting a hospital in the southern Iraqi town of Umm Qasr now partly in Kuwait.

Mr. Galloway said they had not been in touch with relatives of Paul Rida and Michael Wainwright and had no details of the well-being of the two, who are regularly visited by Russian diplomats representing British interests in Baghdad.

Mr. Galloway said he and Mr. Dalyell would ask Mr. Aziz in a meeting expected Sunday to help free the men as a humanitarian gesture. Both are held for illegal entry of Iraq.

"We will say that there is no complaint from us that these people have been unjustly held. They would appear to have broken Iraqi law," he said. "But I think that such a humanitarian gesture on the part of the Iraqis should help break the permanent frost on Britain's relations with Iraq."

Relatives of three Swedes also imprisoned for entering Iraq illegally arrived in Baghdad Saturday. It is their fourth visit to see the men since they were jailed last year.

Diplomats have said Iraq promised to free the Swedes after Stockholm donated large medicine shipments in a humanitarian gesture but has delayed doing so.

During their visit to south Iraq, Mr. Galloway and Mr. Dalyell, both Scots, stood at the Iraq-Kuwait demarcation line, running through Umm Qasr, and said it should be redrawn.

"We can see that this is really part of Iraq," said Mr. Dalyell. A U.N. commission ruled last year that the pre-Gulf war boundary, never officially marked, was some distance south of the true border.

The change gives Kuwait most of Iraq's main naval base of Umm Qasr and a large share in the Rumailah oilfield. Sixty-three Iraqi families now living in Kuwait territory say they will not move from their homes.

Hospital doctors at Umm Qasr told the MPs that U.N. trade sanctions in force since Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait were killing patients because of lack of food and medicine.

"The British government should respond to the Iraqi plea to unfreeze assets which will be used to purchase British pharmaceuticals which are desperately needed in this hospital and in others we have visited," Mr. Galloway told Reuters.

Western relief officials have no accurate statistics on the effect of sanctions on Iraq but agree that infant mortality has risen since the trade ban deprived Iraq of cash by shutting its oil exports.

American oil worker Kenneth Beatty is in reasonable health in an Iraqi jail but there are fears his heart condition could worsen, a Polish diplomat said Sunday.

He is a man who has a history of heart problems so although he is now in normal health condition there is always a risk that his health condition could deteriorate," Jan Piekarski, head of Poland's American interests section in Baghdad, told Reuters.

British Member of Parliament Tam Dalyell (wearing glasses) tours the marshes in southern Iraq. (Below) Mr. Dalyell and fellow MP George Galloway speak to U.N. officials in the port of Umm Qasr (AFP photo)



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## Tougher sanctions in store for Libya

NICOSIA (R) — Arab mediators have told Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi the West is determined to smash Libya's vital oil industry unless he hands over for trial two men accused of the Lockerbie plane bombing, senior Arab diplomats said Sunday.

They said that although the measures had yet to be agreed, Colonel Qadhafi had been given until Aug. 15 to meet Western demands.

Western allies have agreed on the need for wider sanctions but are still debating their options at the United Nations Security Council, the sources said.

They said the options had been outlined to Col. Qadhafi by Arab envoys earlier this month as:

— An American-favoured proposal for a full embargo on Libya's oil sales to prevent its export of 1.36 million barrels a day of crude, the lifeline of its economy.

— A French proposal to freeze all Libya's foreign assets, which could have the more severe effect of preventing Libya using any oil export revenue and blocking its substantial investments abroad.

— A proposal to bar supply of all oil-related machinery and spare parts, which the sources said would not hit Libya immediately but could bring its oil industry to a halt within six months.

The Security Council imposed an air and arms embargo against Libya on April 15, 1992, to force it to hand over for the trial in Britain or the U.S. two alleged intelligence agents blamed for the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jumbo jet over Lockerbie, Scotland in which 270 people died.

The embargo was imposed also to force Libyan cooperation in French investigations into the bombing of a French airliner over Niger the following year, in which 171 people died.

Libya has so far refused to hand over the men.

The diplomats said that Italy, France and Germany, Libya's main European oil clients, opposed the oil embargo proposal.

Freezing Libya's assets would block its access to annual earnings of some \$10 billion from oil exports.

Bankers say Libya has been moving its foreign assets, including \$6.5 billion in cash and holdings in some 900 firms worldwide, into banks in Asia and elsewhere in the Third World, out of the reach of the West.

The Europeans argue that assets freeze would keep them supplied with oil but force Libya to draw on its funds hidden in the Third World to keep the industry working.

"The French proposal for a freeze on assets appears to be a better alternative for Libya at face value... in fact it would be more damaging," the source said.

It was not immediately clear who backed the proposal to block the sale of spare parts and machinery to Libya, he said.

Libyan Foreign Minister Omar Mustafa Al Monasser said earlier this month his country planned to redirect its European investments, except for real estate assets, into "safer areas" in booming Asia.

He said the move was also linked to the freezing of Libya's \$4 billion assets in the U.S. in 1986.

## Pakistan sets deadline for unauthorised Arabs to leave

PESHAWAR (AFP) — Pakistan's North West Frontier Province has ordered all unauthorised Arab nationals to leave the country by May 31 or face arrest, officials said Sunday.

"Those who fail to exit voluntarily by that date will be arrested," provincial Home Secretary Gulzar Khan said of the order, aimed at ridding the area of Islamic militants suspected of involvement in terrorism.

No official number of Arab nationals living in the province has been released but estimates have put the tally at around 2,000.

But officials said the expulsion order would not apply to about 600 Arab nationals living legally in the province, which borders Afghanistan and was a base to many Islamic groups during the neighbouring country's 14-year war.

Those permitted to remain include some 550 Arabs working with registered non-government organisations engaged in relief activities and students sponsored by their governments.

Mr. Khan said nearly 200 Arabs, arrested during a police sweep since early April, were left the country in compliance with official orders.

He did not say where they had gone to, but newspaper reports and sources here mentioned Sudan or Afghanistan as likely destinations.

The home secretary said 17 Arabs were still in police custody and would be released as soon as details of their departure had been worked out.

Reports from Cairo earlier this month said some 230 Arabs had been deported to Sudan but this was denied by the Pakistani government.

Meanwhile, two Algerian diplomats had talks here Saturday with provincial authorities about Peshawar-based Algerians believed to be aiding fundamentalist unrest in the north African country, officials sources said.

The diplomats told police that the Algerians had been publishing provocative literature and shipping it back home, the sources said, adding that the provincial administration had ordered police to track them down.

A team from Cairo also visited the province recently in connection with Egyptian nationals believed to be abetting terrorist activities in Egypt from here.

The crackdown on illegal Arabs is linked to Pakistan's intensified efforts to improve its international image.

## MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

## Leader of Moroccan rights movement said held

PARIS (AFP) — A prominent member of the Moroccan human rights movement whose husband is a political prisoner, has been arrested herself and accused of "lese majeste" for criticising the way prisoners of conscience are treated, three human rights groups said in a statement here Saturday. Zuhikha Al Akhdari, a leader of the Moroccan Human Rights Association (AMRH) is alleged to have offended King Hassan II and could face up to five years in jail. Her husband Tbel Said is serving 12 years at Kenitra prison for opposing the regime. Zuhikha Al Akhdari, a teacher and mother of two children, including a 45-day-old baby, was detained after she denounced a recent deterioration in conditions for political prisoners. Prisoners were denied medical care, refused access to news. Their mail was censored and they were no longer allowed direct contact with visitors, she reportedly said. The three movements who disclosed her arrest, namely the Committees Against Repression in Morocco (CLCRM), the Moroccan Human Rights Defence Association (ASDHOM) and the Association of Relatives and Friends of Missing Persons in Morocco (APADM) are currently fighting a move to make Morocco vice-president of the World Conference on Human Rights taking place in June in Vienna.

## 45 people injured in Egypt fire

CAIRO (AP) — Fire swept a small village in the Nile Delta Saturday, injuring 45 people and destroying 160 mud-brick houses. No deaths were reported. The state-owned Middle East News Agency said 45 fire brigades took part in extinguishing the fire at Kaf Mahmoudia in Sharkia province. It said a short circuit ignited the fire in the hay pens used to store on the roof-tops of their houses. Khamsin winds helped spread the fire from house to house. Authorities are providing tents to peasants left homeless by the fire that continued for four hours.

## U.N. official, minister visit Sudan camps

KHARTOUM (AFP) — A senior U.N. aid official and a Sudanese government minister have visited refugee camps in western Sudan, after reports that people displaced by the civil war were living in desperate conditions, state television reported Saturday. Peter Janvid, the United Nations representative in Sudan, and State Minister at the Presidency Ghazi Salahuddin were shown visiting the camps in the Mairam and Abeyi areas in the Kordofan region, in western Sudan. The official news agency SUNA said up to 17,000 displaced people were living in the area, trekking to the region from Bahr Al Ghazal and Upper Nile regions in southern Sudan. They were being driven from the south by harsh economic conditions not the war between government forces and southern rebels, the agency said. During their camp visit Mr. Janvid and Salahuddin were briefed by relief workers on the food and health situation in the region.

## Eight killed in Algerian violence

ALGIERS (R) — Algerian security forces shot dead seven Muslim fundamentalists in a series of clashes near the capital in which a police sergeant also died, official sources said Saturday. Three men, identified as those behind the murder of two gendarmes at Teneis, 150 kilometres west of Algiers, said the gendarmes, quoted by the official news agency APS. Another 20 people had been arrested over the killings of the security force members. Police mowing a road block shot dead two men described as "terrorists" — the term officials use for fundamentalists — at Birkhadem, on the southern outskirts of Algiers Thursday, APS said. The men opened fire on the road block, fatally wounding a police sergeant, APS said, quoting Algiers police. The same day, police killed a militant at nearby Baraki. On Friday, in the coastal town of Boumerdes, 40 kilometres east of Algiers, security forces killed another militant. In Sidi Fredj military zone in Tipaza province of Friday, security forces shot dead an intruder who ignored a warning, Algiers Radio said. It gave no other details. More than 600 people have been killed in ambushes or clashes in Algeria since a state of emergency was decreed in February 1992 after the authorities scrapped elections the now-banned fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front was poised to win.

## Crackdown signals Saudi aim to quash critics

By Yousef Azmech  
Reuters

RIYADH — Saudi Arabia's crackdown against founders of first human rights group Guadalled the kingdom's determination to quash radical criticism of its own fundamentalist and of Islam, Arab and movement experts say.

The group made clear after a meeting set up earlier this month that it aimed to defend teachers imprisoned for opposing the government's out-of-Western policies and to challenge the Islamic credentials of the country's judicial system.

It was openly challenging the legitimacy of the Saudi system of government. Such a challenge could not be allowed, one Arab expert said.

Western diplomats said other, though the group did not seem a direct threat to the kingdom of Saudi that rules the

world's biggest oil exporting state, its formation was probably seen as the last straw in growing ultra-fundamentalist agitation.

The Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights was viewed as all the more dangerous because it posed as a defender of a cause that would be espoused by human rights activists around the world, the experts said.

Like other governments in the region, Saudi Arabia was also determined to stamp out Islamic extremism that has sprouted such movements as Egypt's violent Al Gama'a Al Islamiya and Algeria's Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), banned after being prevented from winning power by military intervention.

"The situation in Saudi Arabia is nowhere as volatile as that in Egypt or Algeria. These two are poverty stricken. Saudi Arabia is one of the world's richest countries and most of

its people are opposed to the radicals," a diplomat said.

"But they (the government) felt the radicals had to be stopped," he added.

The Saudi royal family rules the kingdom as the upholders of the strict Wahhabi puritanical tradition of Islam and as guardians of Islam's holiest shrines in Mecca and Medina.

## NEWS ANALYSIS

It was seen as the world's leading Muslim fundamentalist power until the emergence of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's Islamic republic in Iran 14 years ago.

The diplomats said that figures on the radical right of the Saudi royals have been preaching an anti-Western and anti-modernisation crusade ever since more than 500,000 mainly American non-Muslim

soldiers were allowed to be based in the kingdom after Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Although the radical preachers have been largely barred from the mosques, they continued to spread their fiery message through cassette recordings and fax transmissions, they added.

Saudi security forces were reported Saturday to have arrested Mohammad Ben Abdullah Al Masari, who has acted as spokesman for the committee since it was founded by six religious figures on May 3.

But Sheikh Abdullah Al Masari, the group's principal figure and Mohammad's father, has made clear it will not disband despite appeals by a senior prince, chastisement by the religious hierarchy and interrogation by the security forces.

"I told them we shall try and try again to convince the au-

thorities with our good intentions and the legitimacy of our group. I also said we shall continue to meet in my house or the houses of any of the other members," he said Saturday after he and another of the group's founders were questioned.

The committee is dismissed by Saudi officials as a group of fanatics who have no following within the kingdom.

But diplomats said that although their appeal was not universal, the radicals touched a sympathetic nerve among some Saudis who would like to see greater respect for individual rights and speedier implementation of reforms that would give them a bigger say in government.

The government promised a consultative council within six months in March last year but all that happened was that a senior judge was appointed as speaker. The council itself has yet to be named.

## JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO  
10:00 Joseph Bakamo  
10:05 News in French  
10:10 Magazine Sportif  
10:15 News in Hebrew  
10:20 News in Arabic  
10:25 The Powers that Be  
10:30 Documentary  
10:35 News in English  
10:40 Street Justice

## PRAYERTIMES

10:00 Fajr  
10:05 (Sunrise) Dhuhr  
10:10 Dhuhr  
10:15 'Asr  
10:20 Maghrib  
10:25 'Isha

## CHURCHES

Rev. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetish.  
Agl. 81040  
Crescent of God Church, Tel.  
pea. 2785.

Rev. Joseph Church Tel. 62490.  
were church of the Assumption Tel.  
form. 7400.  
Bottle in Sale Church Tel. 661757  
Buddhism Church Tel. 622636  
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## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

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Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday inspects road construction along the east coast of the Dead Sea (Petra photo)

## Sharif Zeid inspects new road construction

AL ZARA (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday inspected road construction along the east coast of the Dead Sea and expressed appreciation of efforts by the Ministry of Public Works which is sponsoring the project and the General Machinery Company which is building the road.

Accompanied by Minister of Public Works and Housing Saad Hayel Srour and other officials, the prime minister was briefed on the progress of work as well as the difficulties encountered.

The 31-kilometre stretch of road linking the towns of Zaza and Ghor Haditha is part of a 90-kilometre road stretching from Sweimeh near the northern edge of the Dead Sea and Ghor Safi to the southern parts of the sea.

This part of the road, it was explained, is being built through extremely rough terrain.

Work on the road had originally started in 1987, was halted in 1990 because of the former contractor's default, and was resumed under new contractors last July.

The road, which is expected to cost JD 11,690,350, is due to be completed by August this year.

Sharif Zeid and his party also inspected progress on the construction of the Wadi Mujib Bridge by the Bitar and Saleh Contracting Company.

The bridge is located at the mouth of the Wadi Mujib River, and will link Zarqa-Ghor with the northern and southern parts of the Zarqa-Ghor Haditha Highway.

The 140-metre long, 13.5 metre wide bridge costs JD 1,488,980, and is expected to be completed by the end of November 1993.



HER ROYAL Highness Princess Sarvath Al Hassan Sunday opens the second art exhibition of the Young Muslim Women's Centre for Special Education. According to centre director Ghassoum Al Farej, the exhibition includes works by students at the centre's vocational training section, such as knitwear, ceramics, woodwork and paintings. The centre was established in 1974 and includes three educational sections: the kindergarten, the school and the vocational training section. The exhibit was opened at the Royal Cultural Centre.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

### EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of the Young Muslim Women's Society at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition entitled "Fragments: Weavings and Works on Paper" by Kevin A. Hinch and Margaret M. Hinch at the American Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Suha Katibah Noursi at the Spanish Cultural.
- ★ Art exhibition of works by artists from Jordan, Iraq and Morocco at Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Children's illustration exhibition by Lamia Abdul Sahib at the British Council.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by students from Nazareth College at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Adnan Al Sharif at Baladna Art Gallery.

### LECTURE

- ★ Lecture entitled "Humeima and the Abbasid Revolution" by Dr. Robert Schick at the Friends of Archaeology Centre at 7 p.m.

## BID INVITATION - (BY SEALED ENVELOPE)

### The Ports Corporation — Aqaba

The Ports Corporation wishes to sell by auction the "floating restaurant" which consists of the following parts:

Main structure - Barge made of marine steel.

Superstructure — (shelter accommodation) - closed dining room terrace, kitchenware.

Those interested in this auction are kindly requested to report to tenders secretary at the Ports Corporation, Aqaba during working hours to collect bid copies against a non-refundable sum of JD 50.

Closing date for the sale of bids is Saturday, May 27, 1993, 12:00 hrs. Deadline for accepting offers is Sunday, June 13, 1993, 10:00 hrs. An accredited cheque or bank guarantee of JD 10,000 should be submitted with offers. Offers submitted by sealed envelope and offers which do not meet above conditions will not be considered.

Dr. Dureid Mahasneh  
Director General

Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday opens a seminar entitled "Towards a National Strategy on Women in Jordan"

## Princess Basma urges more women's involvement in socio-economic life

AMMAN (Petra) — "Current circumstances facing Jordan and the major challenges looming ahead require that we reconsider our priorities in all sectors, particularly in matters of concern to women," said Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Sunday.

In opening a seminar entitled "Towards a National Strategy on Women in Jordan," the Princess called for further involvement of women in all aspects of social and economic life.

Those women who are known to be deeply concerned over public issues and women's affairs should be involved in a positive and constructive dialogue to promote and enrich the Jordanian national strategy on women which came into being last year, said the Princess.

She added that this and other efforts are required to genuinely represent women with different affiliations and various political orientations and enable them to express and attain their aspirations.

Jordanian women have an important role to play in the current stage, but this role should be based on sound and correct understanding of the principles of Islam and should also aim at meeting national aspirations.

Princess Basma stressed, she said, the National Committee on Women's Affairs (NCWA) ought to work out a defined and applicable programme and should suggest a special mechanism for its implementation.

The NCWA, the Princess added, requires backing from various women's sectors so that it can contribute more effectively towards serving the nation's causes and interests.

Echoing Princess Basma's views, Upper House of Parliament member Ahmad Obeidat called for increased women's participation in public affairs.

In his address to the seminar, Mr. Obeidat said the holy Koran underlined the importance of women in society and advocated women's sharing with men in trade, agriculture, vocational training and all aspects of public life.

It is therefore unreasonable to

see women's potential lying idle in Arab and Islamic societies in an age of science and technology, Mr. Obeidat stressed.

Jordanian women's role in socio-economic development was advocated by the National Charter, which called for involving women in national development programmes, he said.

The senator called on planners and decision-makers to take into consideration the effective role of women in all matters of concern to the Jordanian society.

At the seminar, Taher Hikmat, a noted lawyer, submitted a working paper tackling the legal and political dimensions of women's involvement in public life and women's political rights.

Ministry of Education Secretary General Munther Masri presented a working paper noting that women's participation in economic affairs was relatively low.

The paper said there exists a high level of unemployment among Jordanian women, reaching 34.4 per cent of the total work force.

## Free zone group heads for Damascus talks

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Free Zones Corporation (JFZC) hopes to play a key role at business conference in Damascus in order to boost foreign investments in free zones in Aqaba and Zarqa, according to JFZC Director General Fahal Qudah.

Speaking shortly before heading for the conference opening Sunday, Mr. Qudah said the Jordanian delegation will hold

direct talks with the participating businessmen from other Arab states and provide them with information and literature on the free zone activities and investments.

The delegation, which groups businessmen and representatives of the JFZC, the Jordanian private and public sectors and the Chambers of Industry and Trade, will also explain the various facilities offered to investors in Jordan.

The three-day meeting, entitled "Arab Investments and the Challenges of the 1990's," aims to open the door for businessmen and investors from the Arab World to study means of using their capital within the Arab region and stem the flow of Arab capital to foreign countries, Mr. Qudah explained.

## Public debate continues over amending of election law

By Sa'eda Kilani  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Parliament deputies Sunday insisted that the issuance of any temporary law without its passing through the legislature is unconstitutional, and the leader of the Communist Party called on the government to clarify its real intentions regarding the amendment of the current election law.

Representing various political streams, three deputies, Abdul Ra'ouf Al Rawabdeh, Hammam Sa'eed and Hussein Mjalli, along with Secretary General of the Jordanian Communist Party Yacoub Zayadin expressed their discontent over the numerous gaps in the current elections law in a conference at the Professional Union Complex. They also called on the public and the media to reject a temporary (election) law that may be issued by the government.

The speakers agreed that such a step (issuing a temporary law) if adopted by the government would be "unconstitutional," and asked that in case such a step was taken that Parliament be convened in an extraordinary session to discuss the matter "since it is the legitimate representative of the majority."

"Only through constitutional

channels is a constitutional right acquired," said deputy Rawabdeh, a staunch opponent of any amendment. "The temporary law is issued only in cases of earthquakes, wars and major crises when the assembly of deputies is nearly impossible."

Speakers at the conference, who agreed on the necessity to convene the Parliament in order to discuss the main points of the law and proposed amendments to be taken there of, differed however over the best model to be adopted.

Deputy Mjalli maintained that when the current election law was adopted, considerations of equality among citizens at all levels had been taken into account.

But deputy Rawabdeh said the "equality principle" is relative. He went on to criticise, as deputy Mjalli did, the various proposals and forms of a future law.

The one-man-one-vote law, for example, Mr. Rawabdeh said, can be applied at a later stage when political parties gain experience and popularity and become a natural feature in the public and political life of Jordan.

Still, Hammam Sa'eed from the Muslim Brotherhood said that any discussion of the law and the form it should take should be carried out in Parliament. He

asked for popular rejection of any, solely government endorsed law, saying that the issuance of a temporary law while Parliament was in recess "is a disgrace to our democratic process."

When the conference turned to discussing a Parliament seat quota for women, a debate was spurred, not only among the speakers but also among participants who insisted on knowing deputy Sa'eed's opinion on the quota system and the presence of women in Parliament.

Dr. Sa'eed said he rejects the quota system and that he believed that women had access to education for a long time and were politically more aware than their male counterparts.

"Not to women only, but we reject the quota system to all other sects and groups," he said. "Women have participated in the elections and were the ones who decided who to elect."

Mr. Zayadin, who called for a quota for women in his speech several times, said that since people are not politically aware at this stage and the democratic process was still in its beginnings, a quota for women has to be introduced, otherwise "women will be prevented from one of their basic rights: To be represented in Parliament and be heard."

## Environmental protection efforts outlined at U.N.-sponsored meeting

NAIROBI (Petra) — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat Sunday addressed a United Nations sponsored meeting here outlining Jordan's endeavours and activities in protecting the environment and conserving nature.

In his address to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) 17th board meeting, Dr. Tubeishat said Jordan was among the first group of nations to endorse resolutions and international conferences and put into force international agreements regarding the protection of the environment.

He added that the country prepared a national programme for the 21st century and has worked out plans that are considered complementary to sustainable development.

Jordan has established several wild life and natural reserves and has been closely cooperating with regional and international organisations concerned with environmental protection, noted the minister, emphasising that the Kingdom's concern for the environment has assumed priority in its political and socio-economic activities.

The Nairobi meeting is discussing the environment and its close relation to economic development, particularly in the third world.

Referring to a UNEP report about the general environmental conditions of the world in 1992, the minister noted that the report drew a grim picture of the situation and underlined that the world should find solutions to environment-related problems as a pre-requisite for attaining sus-



Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat

tainable development in the next century.

He urged industrialised and advanced nations to help poor countries benefit from modern technology to help them protect the environment and attain economic progress.

## Women's union chief promises changes

By Sa'eda Kilani  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The President of the Women's Union in Jordan (WUJ), Asma Khader, Sunday promised substantial changes in the union's policy and infrastructure to upgrade women's status in the country.

In the first press conference held after the union's elections last month, Mrs. Khader said the union seeks, at present, to restore to the women's movement its dignity and honourable status after the difficult stages the union has passed through since its establishment in 1974.

She said that the union had decided to re-issue "Al Ra'eda" magazine (which was suspended in the 1980s) and is seeking other headquarters that would meet the union's basic needs and projects. Its activities, she said, will aim mainly at enhancing women's status, and its seminars will be directed at informing women of their rights and the means used to obtain them.

"We won't be able to have a direct participation in political action," she said in response to a question on the union's participation in the next parliamentary elections. But, she maintained "we will raise public awareness of democracy and human rights through the democratisation of the union itself and through informing women of their political rights."

The WUJ president, who is a member of the Arab Organisation for Human Rights as well as Amnesty International, pointed out that a committee charged with promoting human rights has already been formed, among various others in the union, as part of their information strategy. Others include a cultural, in-

formation, support for the intifada and a financial committee.

As part of her strategy towards innovation and change, Mrs. Khader said that several amendments have to be introduced to the union's current interior regulations. The proposals, which will be presented by WUJ's judicial committee, will be endorsed by the founding committee, she explained.

The women movement suffered major setbacks in the 1970s and 1980s that influenced its actions and accomplishments, observers say.

The WUJ was dissolved in 1980 and was replaced by the GWU. WUJ resumed its functions in 1989 with the restoration of parliamentary life. Both unions now represent women in Jordan; WUJ representing independent women, and GWU accepts only members of women's societies.

Mrs. Khader announced that the union will attempt to gain membership in the General Women's Union (GWU).

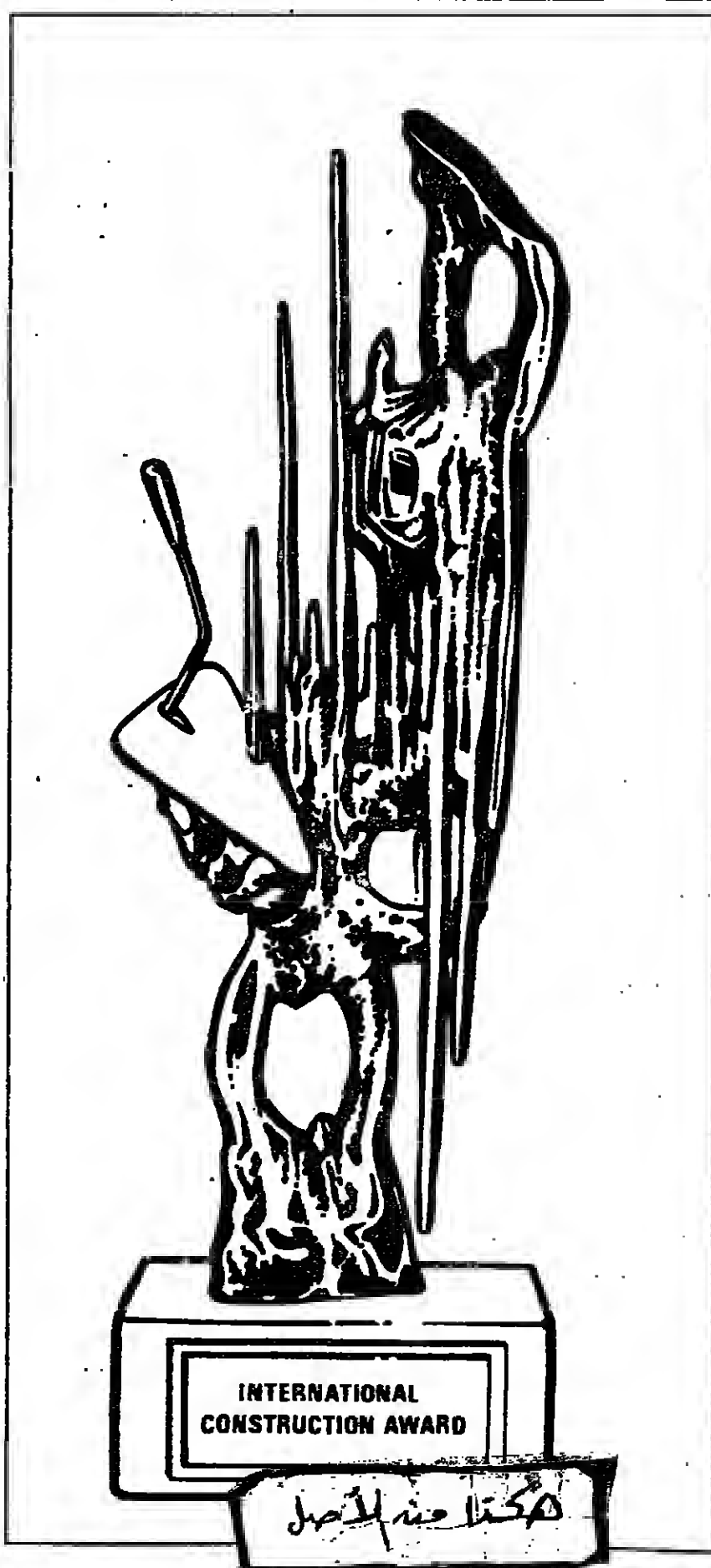
"We head towards cooperation with all institutions that are concerned with women's issues," she said. But "none of them has the right to claim that it is the sole representative of women in Jordan," she stressed.

The WUJ elections last month were a testimony to the radical change that occurred inside the union, Mrs. Khader said.

Membership in WUJ's administration committee, originally planned to be achieved through acclamation, at the end were achieved through proper elections and produced an unexpected result. Asma Khader replaced Da'ad Ma'ath who had been the president for almost 20 years. Equal representation of all political streams in WUJ's administration committee, as would have resulted through acclamation, was not achieved, she said.

The 11-member administrative committee includes: Nadia Shamroukh, Maysar Sa'di, Kawthar Arar, Amineh Dahbour, Hikmat Halasa, Sahab Abu Hudein, Da'ad Ma'ath, Laila Naffa, Yveline Attrash, and Eugeny Haddan.

According to Mrs. Khader WUJ's resorting to election instead of acclamation and the results of elections "showed that the general committee heads towards renewal and change in leadership."



## INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION AWARD

The Sole International Award

For Construction And Associated Industry

"Editorial Office" in cooperation with the Trade Leaders Club has awarded AMMOUN MAINTENANCE & CONTRACTING Co. the International Construction Award 1993 in Madrid, Spain.

This international award has been created in Europe to reward firms around the world which distinguished themselves in one of the branches concerning an important socio-economic industry as the field of construction and its allied building activities.

The selection committee, has awarded AMMOUN MAINTENANCE & CONTRACTING Co. for their outstanding achievement in innovation in their field and on the price-quality ratio of their products.

AMMOUN MAINTENANCE & CONTRACTING Co. a Jordanian company, has outshone and surpassed other competitors in a technical and highly competitive field.

We are proud to have participated in presenting Jordan as a world leader in innovation, quality and competence.

Co-partners:  
ELIAS GEORGE BADDOUR  
AMMAR KHALDOUN MALHAS



AMMOUN MAINTENANCE & CONTRACTING Co.









# Features

## Arab-Americans — a patchwork of assimilation, seclusion

By Mohammad Salam and Donna Abu Nasr  
The Associated Press

DEARBORN, Mich. — The Mexican belly dancer gyrated out of sync with the Egyptian band. Women in long dresses and scarves sat next to others in miniskirts. Fried chicken and rigatoni filled in for traditional roast lamb and rice.

The cultural confusion at the wedding of Abir Hamdan, 18, and Khalil Berro, 22, Arab-Americans of Lebanese-Shiite descent, went unnoticed by most of the guests. But it set Abed Sabaa to shaking his head.

"Not right," he protested as men on the dance floor shook their hips while dancing the dabke. In this "foot banging" dance, men move their legs, hands, shoulders but never their hips. That was for women.

And worse, Mr. Sabaa said, "you don't serve American dishes to Arabs celebrating a wedding."

At weddings in southern Lebanon, where Mr. Sabaa's hometown of Tibnin is located, stuffed lamb known as "ouz" is served with grilled chicken, grilled lamb chops and triangular pastries stuffed with thyme, cheese and spinach.

Mr. Sabaa is typical of many of the 2.5 million Arab-descended people in the United States, who live in an Arabized subculture that borrows heavily from its American surroundings but has not been fully absorbed.

The tall, broad-shouldered Sabaa, 47, who manages an auto shop in Detroit, exhibits a bit of cultural confusion himself. He wears Levi blue jeans, drives a 1992 Mercury that costs as much as a two-bedroom house in Tibnin and plays darts at his favourite hangout, the Palomar Bar. But, he says with a grin, "I still swear at people in Arabic whenever I'm upset."

A smaller, more militant pocket of conservative Arab Muslims lives apart, almost as a nation within a nation. Its participants rigorously guard against what they see as an onslaught of temptations offered by the liberal American society. The conservatives have opened their own schools, avoid their American neighbours and observe strict Islamic customs, including the ban on alcohol, the preparation of food according to Islamic law and the "covering" of women.

The conservatives have opened their own schools, avoid their American neighbours and observe strict Islamic customs, including the ban on alcohol, the preparation of food according to Islamic law and the "covering" of women.

At the Al Ghazaly School in Jersey City, N.J., in a neighbourhood known as "Little Egypt," students are taught that Darwin's theories deny the existence of God. In geography classes, they are told the nation labelled Israel on U.S.-made maps is Palestine.

"If students are sent to non-Muslim school, then this means we're handing over the responsibility of raising our children to non-believers who would leave their black fingerprints on the souls of our boys and girls," said the principal, Adnan Omran, whose school has 300 students ranging up to high school age.

All students wear spartan uniforms of navy blue and white, and girls must cover their heads with oversized white scarves at age 7. Women teachers also wear scarves and ankle-length dresses in accordance with Islamic custom that forbids public display of a woman's hair or figure.

Mr. Omran said the school's duty was to teach students to grow up as "good Muslims." He said that because of their upbringing there were no major disciplinary problems.

"It's the internal deterrent that we instill in the students that helps them fulfill their duties and

"A smaller, more militant pocket of conservative Arab Muslims lives apart, almost as a nation within a nation. Its participants rigorously guard against what they see as an onslaught of temptations offered by the liberal American society. The conservatives have opened their own schools, avoid their American neighbours and observe strict Islamic customs, including the ban on alcohol, the preparation of food according to Islamic law and the 'covering' of women."

Like village coffee shops in the Middle East, the one at 10311 Dix Ave. is spare — only 10 tables and 60 plastic chairs — and offers no menu. It serves three items: Turkish coffee, tea and orange juice. Other orders can be bought from the nearby "rastara," or restaurant.

Any order at the coffee shop costs 30 cents, but the price is stated as "nus riyal." "Nus" is Arabic for half, and the riyal is the currency of Saudi Arabia. No one in the shop knew why a dollar is called a riyal.

Nostalgia is sometimes as thick as the coffee.

Sareini, a bookbinder in Beirut who came here in 1973 seeking a better-paying job, complains he has lost his children to America.

"I don't hear 'hi, pa' from any of my six sons," he said, complaining that they rarely visit him. "They've become Americans."

Later, sipping a beer at the Palomar Bar, he encountered his fourth son, Younis, 24. It was the first time the two had met in almost three months, and the encounter occurred on the Eid Al Fitr, a Muslim holiday celebrated with joyous family gatherings in the Arab World.

## UAE tries to keep dhow boating tradition afloat

By Christine Hauser  
Reuters

ABU DHABI — Sultan Al Mebairi, 99, climbed out of his chauffeur-driven car at sunset and hobbled over to his dhow, laid up at a boatyard, to run a hand along its curves.

He whispered a few words to the wooden boat but preferred that a visitor talk to his younger relative, Salem, about the traditional techniques of dhow building, threatened by the younger generation's taste for speedboats.

"I'm getting old," Sultan said. "But what I know about he (Salem) knows more, because he has taken from the old and the new."

Sultan and Salem Al Mebairi are descended from generations of boat builders in Buteen, a coastal enclave in the United Arab Emirates capital.

For centuries Buteen's boatyards have built the wooden dhows of eastern traders in the Gulf.

British archaeologists working on Abu Dhabi's islands have uncovered flint chips and pottery which they say point to a maritime trade corridor going back 7,000 years.

Historians cannot say precisely when dhows first appeared in the Gulf but they have played a key role in the region's ancient trade and in pearl diving and fishing.

Now the boat-making tradition is threatened as never before by the affluence that has come with oil wealth.

"Now oil has come to the country," Salem said. "Young people in the old times were with their fathers. Now the experience of old men will be forgotten."

In a push to forestall the death of a long tradition, UAE President Sheikh Zaid Bin Sultan Al Nahayan in April pledged to sponsor more traditional boat races.

The move is part of a drive to lure UAE youth, who opt for flashy powerboats and jet skis instead of rounds of mint tea on the tranquil decks of a dhow making its stately way at 12 knots.

Sheikh Zaid will give away luxury cars and thousands of dirhams as prizes for races featuring specially built dhows turned out by dhow builders, including wooden boats with huge billowing sails and slender, cigar-shaped row-boats seating one hundred oarsmen.

"A long time ago people were diving for pearls, fishing and travelling in the dhows. Now we have airplanes and shipping," Salem said. "The main point is for people to go back to the old traditions of 100 years ago."

Most Gulf trading boats have a distinctive pointed bow which swells into a round underbelly for riding waves. Some archaeologists say their square stern was fashioned after the galleons manned by 16th century Portuguese sailors.

In the old days the wooden boats were built with planks of Indian teak and plugs of cotton steeped in fish oil. As supplies of teak became scarce, boatmen turned to steel and fibreglass.

"But besides the steel and electric drills, we still do the design the old-fashioned way," Salem said.

A 35-metre-long luxury dhow commissioned at a minimum cost of 500,000 dirhams (\$136,000), quickly rising to double or triple that amount, will sport air conditioning and varnished interiors.

But 30,000-dirham boats destined to serve as the workhorses of the Gulf for Iranian and Arab traders are closer to the rugged versions of the constructors' seafaring ancestors.

An emirates industrial bank study in April said cheaper fibreglass vessels were replacing wooden boats at dhow building yards in the seven UAE emirates.

"Boat-building...has hitherto revolved around the traditional hand-crafted wooden boat," the study said.

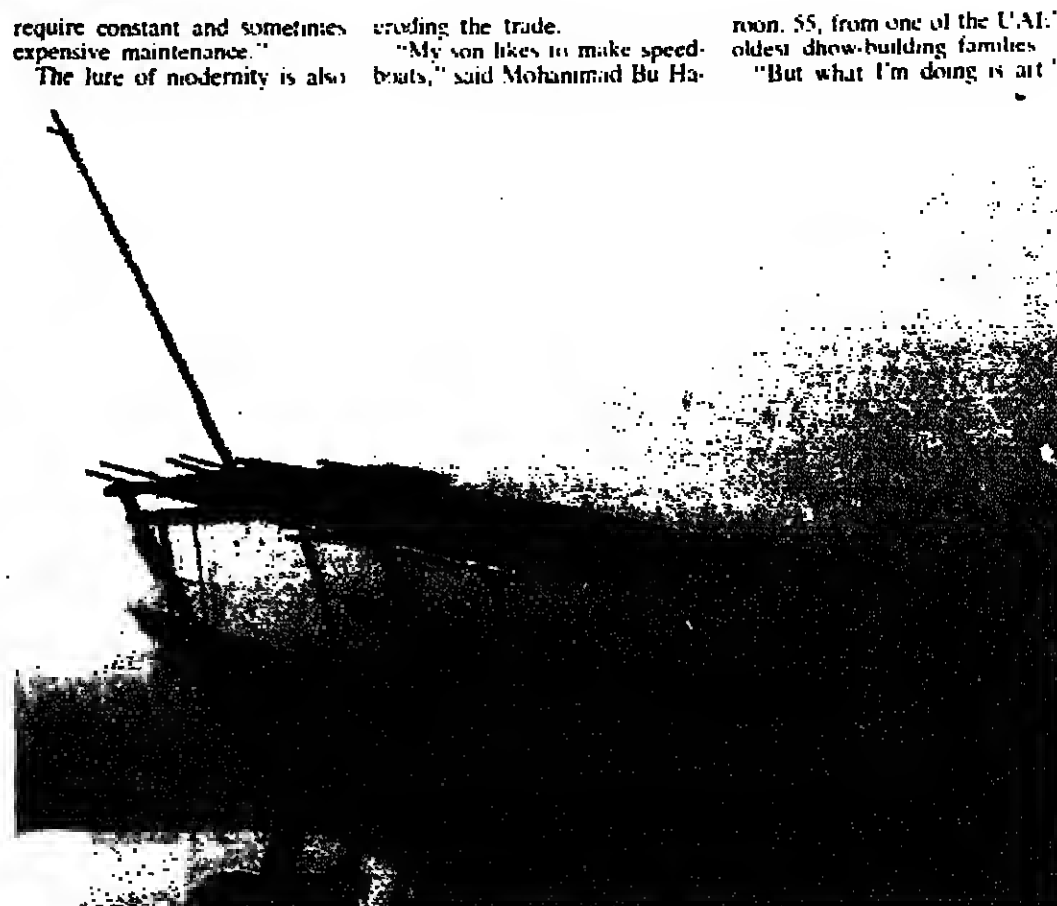
Wooden boats take rather long to build, the number of craftsmen for the traditional boats is limited, and the boats

require constant and sometimes expensive maintenance.

The lure of modernity is also eroding the trade.

"My son likes to make speed-boats," said Mohammad Bu Haroon, 55, from one of the UAE's oldest dhow-building families.

"But what I'm doing is art."



GULF DHOWS: Rare avis or... The trade of building wooden boats is slowly dying faced with competition from fiberglass speed boats (File photo)

## Storm in a Coke glass over publication of 'secret' recipe

By Richard Walker  
Reuters

ATLANTA — The author of an "unauthorised" history of Coca-Cola has found himself in a dispute with the company over whether his book contains the closely guarded secret recipe of the world's most famous soft drink.

Former librarian Mark Pendergast — whose "For God, Country and Coca-Cola" went on sale two weeks ago — says an archivist let him copy a century-old formula of Coke inventor John Pemberton during one of many visits to corporate headquarters in Atlanta.

Coca-Cola's attempts to keep the recipe secret are legendary. It pulled out of India in 1977 rather than divulge it to the government.

Mr. Pendergast writes that he was allowed to copy what appears to be the "original formula" from the tattered remains of Mr. Pemberton's records.

Among the ingredients listed are fluid extract of coca leaves, caffeine, vanilla extract, lime juice, citric acid, alcohol and various natural flavours including orange oil, lemon oil, nutmeg, cinnamon and coriander.

Coca-Cola has responded by dismissing Mr. Pendergast's claims and calling his book "The latest in a long line of previous, unsuccessful attempts to reveal a 107-year-old mystery. The secret formula and process of manufacture remain a secret."

The 556-page book "falls short of being a totally truthful effort," the company said in a statement.

Coca-Cola said it gave Mr. Pendergast the same access to corporate records and files that it would give "any serious researcher."

Mr. Pendergast told Reuters he saw the row over Coke's secret formula as a storm in a teacup.

Over the years, he said, Coca-Cola officials had made changes to the formula, including removing traces of cocaine in 1903, reducing caffeine and replacing sugar with corn sweetener.

The biggest controversy occurred in 1985 when Chairman Roberto Goizueta unveiled a sweeter "new Coke" to such public outrage in the United States that the company was compelled to bring back the old formula as "Coke classic."

The latest row, Mr. Pendergast said, should not overshadow his effort to chronicle how "a patent medicine invented in the southern United States as a brain tonic and aphrodisiac has grown into the world's most popular consumer product."

Coke's pioneering mass marketing has influenced business, culture and politics worldwide, the book says.

So pervasive is the business empire that the Atlanta-based company makes more money in Japan than in the United States and its products account for nearly half of the world soft drinks market.

Harvard-educated Pendergast, who grew up in Atlanta, said he had a hard time persuading publishers to buy his idea because his mixture of corporate history and Coke's interaction with American and global culture wasn't seen as "a hard enough business book."

Publisher Charles Scribner's has had such success with the book that a Commonwealth edition will be published this year and Japanese, Korean, Chinese, French, Italian, German, Spanish and Portuguese versions are planned.



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## U.N. braces for more fighting as Bosnian Serbs resume voting

SARAJEVO (R) — Fierce fighting that has raged in northern and southern Bosnia for the past week could soon spread to central regions once more, a United Nations official said Sunday.

Clashes between Serbs and Muslims around the northern town of Brcko were reported Saturday night and Sunday morning, Commander Barry Frewer said.

Frontline positions around Brcko, which commands a vital Serb supply corridor, did not however appear to have moved much recently despite machinegun and artillery duels.

The Bosnian Serb Panthers special forces unit accused Muslims of taking advantage of a Serb referendum this weekend on a peace plan for Bosnia to launch an attack on Brcko.

"The fact is they lost Brcko last May," Panthers spokeswoman Tamara Ognjevic, in black cap and combat fatigues, told Reuters Television.

"It was an excellent chance for them to invade Brcko and cut the corridor."

U.N. officials and Muslim media have in recent days spoken of a Serb offensive in the area.

In southwestern Bosnia, Muslim forces traded fire in the ancient city of Mostar Sunday morning, Maj. Frewer said.

Hostilities continued despite a meeting between rival military leaders aimed at ending the fighting between the former allies which began in the town a week ago.

Croatian radio accused the Muslims of starting Sunday's attack.

Maj. Frewer said Spanish U.N. peacekeeping troops were still being fired on by units of the Bosnian Croat Forces (HVO), who controlled access to and from Mostar.

He also voiced concern that fighting between Croats and Muslims would erupt again in central Bosnia, where tension has been rising since bitter clashes between the two sides subsided earlier this month.

"We are watching growing tensions in the Travnik, Vitez, Kiseljak areas," Maj. Frewer told reporters.

"There is evidence reinforcements are being moved in and we have seen some new HVO gun positions around Vitez."

He added: "We are bracing for the possibility of new fighting around this area."

A team of U.N. military observers came under fire near Kiseljak Saturday while they were on a mission to arrange a body and prisoner exchange between Muslims and Croats.

One of the observers was wounded in the foot by a bullet fired from a distance of about 150 metres.

"We don't know who fired," said Maj. Frewer. "But we suspect it came from an HVO position."

Muslims and Croats, until recently allied in their fight against the Bosnian Serbs, have turned on each other in an attempt to grab territory ahead of possible implementation of a U.N.-backed peace plan which divides Bosnia into ethnic areas.

Maj. Frewer also reported sporadic small arms and mortar fire around the eastern Muslim town of Srebrenica, where agreement has been reached with Serb forces to establish a demilitarised zone.

The Bosnian Serbs were still insisting that no United Nations aid convoys would be allowed into the town until demilitarisation was completed, a process expected to take a few more days.

A spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, John McMillan, said people from outlying villages wanted to return to the town of Srebrenica, but had been told by Canadian peacekeepers there that the situation was still too unsettled.

Mr. McMillan said the town was suffering from a shortage of water and had only enough food for a week. It also needed seed as the planting season was coming to an end.

For all these reasons, Mr. McMillan said, the resumption of aid convoys was essential.

Meanwhile, Bosnian Serbs resumed voting Sunday in a referendum expected to deliver an overwhelming "no" to a United Nations-sponsored peace plan to end the republic's 13-month civil war.

Even before polling in the weekend plebiscite was completed, their leaders said they would call for fresh proposals if voters rejected the scheme.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic announced he would ask Mikhail Gorbachev to draw up a new peace plan, but officials at the former Soviet president's think tank in Moscow said they knew nothing of the request.

## Khasbulatov: West pushing Russia to ruin

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin's chief political rival portrayed Russia at the weekend as a country on its knees before the Western world, being pushed towards civil war, disintegration and foreign control.

Parliamentary Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov said Mr. Yeltsin's attempt to bypass the legislature in drafting a new constitution reflected dictatorial ambitions. In these designs, he was encouraged by a self-serving West.

"Attempts to solve the present crisis... by anti-constitutional means will lead irrevocably to the collapse of Russia — something which influential international political, financial and industrial circles are striving for in the most open manner," he wrote in Rossiyskaya Gazeta newspaper.

"The time has come when not only deputies and ministers, but only regional authorities, but all citizens should recognise the danger facing the country of death, war and subjugation to foreign powers," he said.

"The danger to Russia of 'Balkanisation' is a real one."

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev met international mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg in Moscow Sunday to discuss ways of stopping fighting in former Yugoslavia.

Nationalist opponents of Mr. Yeltsin see Mr. Kozyrev's backing of Western policies in the region as a symptom of a sellout of traditional Russian interests to the United States.

Mr. Yeltsin's estranged former political ally, Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi, also accused the West this week of having deliberately engineered the collapse of the Soviet Union and suggested it now sought to dismember Russia.

Both Mr. Rutskoi and Mr. Khasbulatov point to outspoken Western support for Mr. Yeltsin and to the West's unprecedented influence over Russian economic policy as Moscow carries financial favour to see it through radical market reforms.

The strongly nationalist remarks coincide with an offensive by Mr. Yeltsin against conservative political enemies including, in the first rank, Mr. Rutskoi and Mr. Khasbulatov.

Building on what he regards as a triumph in last month's national confidence vote, he has sacked two key conservative officials and summoned a special assembly for June 5 to draft and possibly adopt a new constitution.

The move, bypassing the existing constitution, has opened a split in the parliamentary opposition, with some long-time allies of Mr. Khasbulatov now backing Mr. Yeltsin's plan.

In comments to foreign journalists Saturday, Mr. Khasbulatov issued an implicit warning to the West, speaking of possible anarchy rather than any foreign domination in Russia if Mr. Yeltsin flouts the constitution.

"And that means that those nuclear, biological, chemical and other weapons that are very dangerous to the environment and to other states many end up out of control," he said.

Mr. Yeltsin seeks to push through a new constitution granting him firm control over government and powers to dissolve parliament. It would abolish the present legislature, which he sees as a symbol of the old Soviet order.

Recent remarks by some members of the parliamentary leadership, Mr. Khasbulatov not among them, have suggested a possible compromise between the presidential version and a parliamentary draft.



Former Cambodian Prime Minister and non-communist resistance leader Son Sann, head of the opposition Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party, releases a pigeon during an election rally Monday (AFP photo)

## Peacekeeping nations ask Cambodia to control violence

PHNOM PENH (AP) — Nations participating in the U.N. peacekeeping operation told the Cambodian government Sunday it must reduce violence against the opposition or else next week's elections may not be recognised as free and fair, diplomats said.

The level of violence and intimidation "is still too high," French ambassador Philippe Coste told reporters after leading the diplomats in a meeting with Prime Minister Hun Sen.

He said the government must do more to reduce attacks during the final days of the campaign for the U.N.-organised elections on May 23-28 what the U.N. peacekeeping mission hopes will be the first democratic polls in Cambodia since 1972.

The nations told Hun Sen there was evidence that the government was behind some of the violent attacks on opposition party members, a Western diplomat who demanded anonymity said. Mr. Hun Sen promised to make every efforts to ensure that his orders to guarantee neutral and secure conditions were carried out, the diplomat said.

Officials of one of Cambodia's main opposition parties, meanwhile, accused the Phnom Penh government of murdering party workers, but the party's leader said it will still participate in the elections.

"I want to have the election, but the election must... be free of political violence and assassination," Son Sann, head of the Buddhist Liberal Democratic Party, told a rally Sunday of about 5,000 supporters in downtown Phnom Penh.

If Son Sann's party pulled out, the United Nations would be under great pressure to cancel the election. Son Sann's group is one of the three guerrilla factions that fought Hun Sen's Vietnamese-installed government for nearly 13 years before a 1991 Paris peace accord authorised the U.N. election.

## U.S. seeks frank talks with ASEAN on human rights

BANDAR SERI BEGAWAN (AFP) — The United States Sunday said it wanted to have frank exchange of views with non-Communist South East Asia on human rights but will not allow differing views on the issue to hamper its ties with the region.

Winston Lord, the U.S. representative to a dialogue with the region held, said that having a different perspective on the issue did not mean that Washington could not have good relations with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN).

"We share many interests in security, economic and political concerns," Mr. Lord, U.S. assistant secretary for East Asian and Pacific affairs, told AFP just before entering into the final day of the two-day 11th U.S.-ASEAN dialogue.

The dialogue, preceding the May 20-21 enlarged security talks in Singapore between ASEAN's senior officials and its seven major trading partners, had political and security issues on its agenda for the first time.

Mr. Lord had linked human rights and democracy with security after expressing Washington's readiness to include regional security concerns in future dialogues with ASEAN.

"Security involves more than just arms and alliances. Democracy and human rights are components of a broader definition of security," Mr. Lord said at the opening day of the dialogue.

He explained Sunday that Washington had made the link because promoting universal principles of freedom and human rights served as the central pillars of U.S. foreign policy under the new administration.

ASEAN, which groups Brunei with Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore and the Philippines, has rejected many previous attempts by the United States to define human rights, saying the right of society overrode individual rights as had been espoused by Washington.

"The point I want to stress is that open societies and democracies do not attack or fight one another or practice terrorism. They are more peaceful," Mr. Lord said. "They do not produce refugees."

ASEAN had rejected attempts by Washington to force it to adopt a hard line against Burma, ruled since 1988 by a military junta that had been condemned by the West for violating human rights and ignoring the results of a 1990 general election won by the opposition.

The group had insisted that it continued its policy of engaging Burma in a constructive dialogue to wean it back into the international community.

Mr. Lord had said in Peking Wednesday that the renewal next month of China's most-favoured nation trade status would "very likely" be linked to progress in human rights, trade and arms non-proliferation.

ASEAN's senior officials welcomed Washington's assurances that it would not make the thorny issue of human rights an obstacle to closer cooperation.

## British woman makes second Everest attempt

LONDON (R) — Mountaineer Rebecca Stephens has launched a second attempt to become the first British woman to climb Mount Everest, an expedition spokesman said. Ms. Stephens, 31, pressed ahead with three sherpas when high altitude fatigue forced fellow climber John Barry to turn back. "She's very determined and committed," spokesman David Fuller told Reuters. On Monday, team member Harry Taylor became the first mountaineer to reach the summit of Mount Everest from the Nepalese side without oxygen. The expedition commemorates the anniversary later this month of the first conquest of the mountain in 1953 by New Zealanders Edmund Hillary and sherpa Tenzing Norgay.

## Actor Claude Akins fighting for life

PASADENA, California (AFP) — Actor Claude Akins was listed in serious condition Saturday after two operations for stomach cancer and complications, the actor's agent and hospital officials said. The 74-year-old Akins was upgraded from critical to serious after the second operation, said Huntington Memorial Hospital nursing supervisor Barbara Frum. "He had cancer surgery last week and they removed a portion of his stomach, more than half, and said they got 100 per cent of the cancer," said Mike Belson, Akins's agent. "But then he had some sort of blockage... I think in the colon." Akins appeared in the soap opera One Life To Live. Film credits include The Caine Mutiny, The Defiant Ones, Rio Bravo, Porgy and Bess, and How The West Was Won.

## Making a meal of it

ALMA (AFP) — A "born-again" ex-convict is drawing crowds in the capital of Western Samoa with a stage act which involves eating live animals and quoting the Bible. The Samoa Times published a photo of Aloa Mataitusi in action eating a live cat. Mr. Mataitusi was serving a life sentence for murder in neighbouring U.S. Samoa, but authorities released him after 14 years in prison, saying he had become a devout Christian. According to the Times, Mr. Mataitusi, in a recent performance, enthralled an audience by eating cockroaches and a lizard. He was about to eat a puppy when a spectator, a member of parliament, intervened and saved the dog. Between courses, Mr. Mataitusi made obscure references to the Bible. Police say they cannot take action because cruelty to animals is not a crime in Western Samoa.

## Diana-Charles transcripts "faked"

LONDON (AFP) — Transcripts published this week of a purportedly recorded rift between Prince Charles and Princess Diana are "fakes," two Sunday papers said quoting a highly-placed Buckingham Palace source and a linguistic expert. The Sunday Times said Prince Charles had "told palace officials that the transcript... is a fake." "Senior sources" at the palace "also claimed that reports of the royal couple being 'bugged' by the security services were the result of a hoax," the paper added. It quoted the sources as saying "the prince is very angry at being a pawn in a tabloid circulation war." The Sunday Times said the denials were "significant" in that "when previous tapes of conversations were published containing more damaging material, the royal family made no attempt to deny their authenticity." The Observer called on a forensic linguistic expert from Glasgow University whose work had been "accepted as evidence in the court of appeal in quashing evidence." According to the paper this expert said the transcripts "cannot be accepted as authentic." He said the words respectively attributed to the Prince and Princess of Wales were "not the words of one person but of two or more sources." He said everyone had his or her own "verbal fingerprint" based on variations in sentence lengths, the number of words of three letters and the number of words beginning with vowels.

## Brazilian writer suffers heart attack

BRASILIA (R) — Jorge Amado, Brazil's best-known writer and author of more than 20 novels, including Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands, suffered a heart attack but is recovering well, a relative said Saturday. Mr. Amado, 80, was admitted to intensive care late Thursday at Hospital Alameda in his hometown of Salvador, Bahia state, for treatment of a heart attack and acute fluid in the lungs, said Luiz Amado, his sister-in-law. "He's much better, he's getting out of the crisis," she said in a telephone interview from the hospital.

## 10 killed in S. African violence

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — Hooded gunmen made five people lie on the ground and shot them to death Saturday in one of several attacks that killed 10 people, police said.

In other incidents, three off-duty soldiers were arrested on suspicion of opening fire on a taxi, killing three passengers, in Eastern Transvaal province, and two people died when gunmen shot at buses carrying Inkatha Freedom Party supporters from a march in Natal province.

More than 9,000 blacks have died in political violence in the past three years, with most clashes stemming from a long struggle for power between supporters of the African National Congress (ANC) and Inkatha.

Much of the violence has been in Natal and black townships around Johannesburg.

Two men wearing hoods and armed with 9mm pistols carried out the execution-style killings of the five people in Edendale, near Pietermaritzburg in Natal, police said. They said the attack might be related to the killing of two women in the area last week.

Police also said a white man has been arrested in connection with a plot to kill popular anti-apartheid figure Joe Slovo, a leader of the Communist Party and ANC.

A white extremist and two leaders of the white right-wing are being held in connection with the assassination of black leader Chris Hani on April 10.

Meanwhile, South African President F.W. de Klerk and African National Congress President Nelson Mandela were named winners of the 1993 Philadelphia Liberty Medal and will receive the prize on July 4.

The two leaders were cited for their efforts to reform South Africa's apartheid system, in the spirit of the medal, which honours the ideals behind America's founding.

Paris has now discreetly reclaimed limited voting rights in the organisation's Supreme Military Committee, a senior military official said last week.

Mr. Leotard said it was vital that American troops remain on European soil as long as "the Europeans have not managed to organise a minimal political unity of their own."

He said European defence unity should be organised around a Franco-German axis.

A "Eurocorps" is now being organised whose main units will initially be drawn from the French and German armies. It will be placed at NATO's disposal in case of international crises.

Breaking with the policies of France's past Socialist govern-

ments, Paris has now discreetly reclaimed limited voting rights in the organisation's Supreme Military Committee, a senior military official said last week.

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Breaking with the policies of France's past Socialist govern-

## France calls for 're-think' of NATO

PARIS (R) — French Defence Minister Francois Leotard has called for a "re-think" of NATO, towards whose integrated military command France has steadily moved closer since a centre-right government took office in March.

"If the United States sees Europe as a partner more than a rival, our thoughts and efforts must turn to finding a degree of complementarity between the European Community, the Atlantic alliance and the Western European Union," Mr. Leotard told a seminar for senior officers.

"That means we will have to re-think NATO's organisation. It is absurd to confine it only to

preparing to meet a threat that no longer seems likely," he said.

Mr. Leotard did not detail the re-organisation he had in mind. But defence specialists believe the new government would like the alliance re-structured to give European members, among whom France wields major influence, equal say with Washington.

France is a political member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), but then-President Charles De Gaulle quit its military structure in 1966 saying Washington refused to share major decision-making with its allies there.

Breaking with the policies of France's past Socialist govern-



The successful Irish Eurovision Song Contest team, consisting of John McElhinney, Patricia O'Neill, Martina Tobi, Niamh Kavanagh, presenter Fionula Sweeney and Garrett Wall (AFP photo)

## Ireland wins Eurovision contest, but Balkans share the limelight

MILLSTREET, Ireland (R) — Hosts Ireland won the annual Eurovision Song Contest spectacular for the second year running, beating off competition from 24 countries including Bosnia, Croatia and Slovenia.

The upbeat ballad In Your Eyes triumphed in the biggest ever Eurovision line-up after a three-hour extravaganza held in a converted Irish show-jumping stadium and watched live by 300 million television viewers in Europe and beyond.

It was a fifth win for the Eurovision veteran Ireland but Balkan states competing for the first time in the pop parade were also stars of the show, raising a storm of applause for their songs although none came among the top scorers.

The group from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Fazla, had left Sarajevo under heavy fighting to enter their ballad about a soldier defending the city and had said before the contest they felt like winners just for being there.

The group came way down the field in the 38th annual Eurovision but at least got a maximum

12 points from one of the 25 national juries, Turkey, Croatia, a strong favourite with bookmakers before the contest, had its hopes dashed when the vocal harmony Don't Ever Cry failed to stir the judges.

Ireland has put millions of dollars and months of work into staging the song for Europe show in a rural setting in the picturesque village of Millstreet around 270 kilometres from the capital Dublin, in County Cork.

Pandemonium broke out in the audience after a tense race to the finish against second placed Britain, which offered a jaunty tune called Better The Devil You Know performed by Liverpool singer Sonia. The Irish Television commentator had earlier called the British song "mediocre".

The venue, an equestrian arena owned by a local entrepreneur Noel C. Duggan was transformed into a high-tech broadcasting hub for the contest, which drew thousands of journalists, music producers and tourists to the tiny village and gave a huge boost to the local economy.

The Eurovision winner got a 10,000 punt (\$15,130) trophy in a rural setting in the picturesque village of Millstreet around 270 kilometres from the capital Dublin, in County Cork.

This year's winning entry was sung by Niamh Kavanagh, a bank clerk and part-time blues session vocalist who performed on the soundtrack of the Alan Parker movie The Commitments, about a group trying to hit the big time on the Dublin music scene.

The 25-year-old said after the show she was overwhelmed and ecstatic to have pulled off a home win, while the organisers declared the show a resounding technical triumph.

Irish press coverage of the annual showdown has concentrated more on the technical wizardry needed to broadcast to 33 countries than the quality of the songs.

## U.S. wants more documents from Hanoi

HANOI (R) — A U.S. senator hinted Sunday that the United States might lift its economic embargo of Vietnam provided it got more documents from Hanoi about American soldiers whose fate has gone unresolved since the Vietnam War.

Senator John Kerry, a Democrat from Massachusetts, delivered a message from President Bill Clinton to Vietnamese President Le Duc Anh on the issue of U.S. prisoners-of-war and servicemen Missing-In-Action (PoW/MIA).

It remained the key issue in relations between Washington and Hanoi, including an end to the embargo and to U.S. vetoes on International Monetary Fund (IMF) loans to Vietnam, Sen. Kerry told a news conference after meeting Mr. Anh and government ministers.

"The impediment to the United States moving on the embargo or the IMF has been remaining questions or reservations about PoW/MIA. That is why resolution of this problem is so important," Sen. Kerry said.

Washington believed Vietnam had "greatly cooperated" by signing the 1991 Paris accords for Cambodia and clearing its post-war reeducation camps — issues on which the United States had demanded action by Hanoi — and on PoW/MIA.

"But questions still exist. So the real question on the IMF and the embargo is how rapidly can we eliminate these remaining questions on PoW/MIA," he said.

"If we can proceed rapidly to answer the question, I'm confident the United States will proceed forward in the relationship," he said.

He said Vietnam had done a great deal to cooperate, especially since last month's row over a Russian document which indicated Hanoi held 600 more prisoners in 1972 than it acknowledged.

Although Vietnam rejected the document as a fake and U.S. experts said they had doubts about it, the U.S. anti-Vietnam lobby used it to raise questions about Hanoi's good faith.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Cuba (R) — Cuban doctors are baffled by a mysterious nerve disease that has affected more than 25,000 people at a time when the Communist-ruled Caribbean island is experiencing widespread food and medicine shortages.

"There's something strange about this thing," Damarys Fuente, a neuro-ophthalmic specialist, told reporters last week at a hospital in the eastern city of Santiago de Cuba, where several dozen new cases were being admitted daily.

Cuban health authorities have declared a nationwide health alert to deal with the epidemic, which they initially identified last April 3 as optic neuritis, an illness linked to Vitamin deficiency causing eyesight disorders.

Since then they have widened the diagnosis, describing the illness as a "neuropathic epidemic", a disorder attacking the nervous system that can affect not only the eyes but other parts of the body as well, causing muscle disorders and painful cramps.

Cuba has asked the international medical community to help track down the precise origin of the illness, which was so far being attributed to a possible combination of Vitamin deficiency and an unidentified toxin or virus.

"This illness spares nobody," said Esteban Lazo, the Communist Party First Secretary of Santiago de Cuba province.

Mr. Lazo, who is also a vice-president of Cuba's ruling Council of State, said four provincial party cadres were among the more than 1,000 victims of the illness in his province alone, which is in the southeastern part of the island.

All of the island's 14 provinces are affected, especially the most Western provinces of Pinar del Rio and Havana. Up until April 30, nearly 26,000 cases had been reported, more than 19,000 of them involving vision problems. President Fidel Castro has said the epidemic is still spreading.

"We're looking at an illness that has several manifestations," Armando Guerra, Santiago de Cuba's provincial Health Ministry director, said. "It doesn't tally with any of the patterns that appear in the medical literature," he added.

Joaquin Rodriguez Olivares, a

population of more than 10 million people.

Mr. Guerra said the vast majority of patients being treated in Santiago de Cuba were improving. "We have nobody who has gone blind or who has been paralysed," he said.

Because many of the first patients in west Cuba were farm workers, experts had examined the possibility that the disease was caused by pesticides, agriculture-related toxins or even home-brewed alcohol. But they found no link.

A virus similar to a type known as Coxsackie had also been identified in some patients, but investigations in this direction were continuing, the Health Ministry said.

Cuban leaders say the mysterious circumstances of the epidemic meant they could not rule out the possibility it might have been introduced to the island by Cuba's enemies.

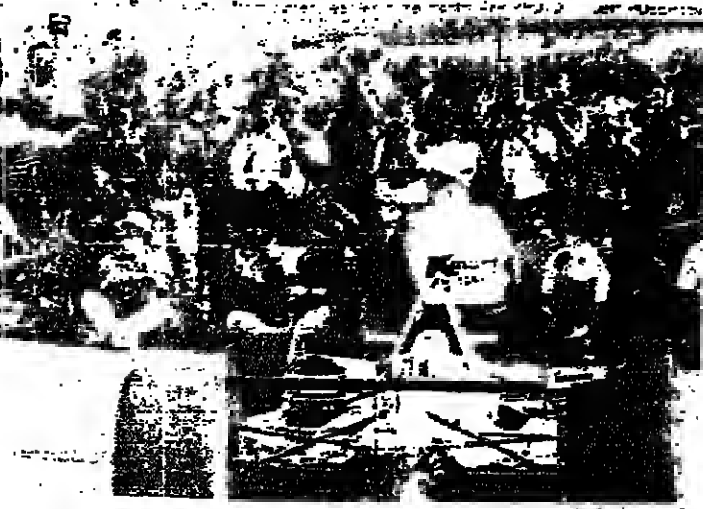
In 1981, President Fidel Castro accused the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of introducing a fatal strain of haemorrhagic dengue fever to the island.

Cuban authorities are distributing a Vitamin supplement containing Vitamin B complex, manufactured in pill form from imported Vitamins, to Cuba's entire

population of more than 10 million people.



## Sports



Current Formula One champion Nigel Mansell faces a sea of photographers as he sits on his car after qualifying for the Indianapolis 500 (AFP photo)

## Mansell qualifies 2 weeks after surgery

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — Nigel Mansell's education at the Indianapolis motor speedway continued Saturday with a successful qualifying run for the May 30 Indianapolis 500.

"It's very frustrating," said Mansell, who aborted one attempt in the early afternoon after three laps above 218 mph (350 kph). He came back to qualify in the final hour of the first four days of time trials with a four-lap average of 220.255 mph (354.390 kph).

"Lunchtime, I did 222.9 (358.6 kph) in the heat of the day... I put three laps together in the 220s (357 kph) and I felt very optimistic of going well. I was itching to go, like I have been all my career," said the 39-year-old Englishman, who didn't drive on the 2.12-mile (4-kilometre) oval until Wednesday.

The long wait between qualifying attempts was a unique experience to Mansell.

"We usually only have an hour (to qualify)," said Mansell, referring to Formula One where he won the world title last year before switching to the IndyCar series this year.

Mansell's first lap was 221.811 mph (356.894 kph). He dropped to just over 219 mph (353 kph) on his second lap, then climbed over the 220 mph (354 kph) mark on his final two laps to earn the right to race on an oval for the first time in his career.

A quick trip home to Clearwater, Florida, was on Mansell's immediate agenda as he rehabilitates from April 28 back surgery. "I'm going to see my specialist as soon as I arrive and get my back checked out," he said.

## 2nd Division Basketball Championship Final round begins today

By Aileen Bannayan  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The final round of the Second Division Basketball Championship, organised by the Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF), begins Monday at the Sports Palace Court.

The four qualifying teams — Abbasi, Homentmen, Gazet Hashem and Yarmouk Amman — will be competing in the one-leg decisive round at the end of which only the leading team will be promoted to the First Division in 1994.

In the final match of the first round, played Saturday evening at the JBF court, Abbasi and Homentmen fought it out in the most competitive match of the championship attended by a good number of fans of both teams.

Abbasi managed to keep their lead in the match and maintained a 1-point lead to overcome Homentmen 58-57 after the first half ended 34-21 for Abbasi.

Abbasi took the lead from the onset of the match leading 6-0 and 12-4 depending on taller players and taking advantage of the lack of rebounding and inaccurate shooting by their opponents. Homentmen managed to catch up after Seven Sarkissian scored 6 points to tie 12-12.

However, Abbasi's energetic players seemed determined to win as they converted many turnovers and burdened Homentmen with many fouls to again widen their lead to 28-12 with 5 minutes remaining.

Homentmen's Ali Abu Rahmeh rebounded and scored and teammate Vasken Adjemian sank a final-second three pointer ending the half 34-21 for Abbasi.

In the second half, Homentmen secured defensive rebounding by Vicken Avakian and Abu Rahmeh as they narrowed the gap to 38-31. Abbasi, on the other hand, scored through foul shots by Omar Fadel and managed to keep a 43-35 lead.

However, Homentmen again managed to narrow the gap and tied the score at 45-45 by a three-pointer by Adjemian.

Abbasi then led 48-45, and Homentmen tied again after the referee called a technical foul on Abbasi. Homentmen's playmaker Robert Chamaian scored to give his team the lead at 52-50 with 2 minutes remaining. Abbasi then scored to lead 53-52 as fans of both teams cheered their teams hoping to win.

Homentmen again led 54-53 in the final minute, however, Abbasi took advantage of foul shots and a turnover to lead 58-54 before Homentmen's Adjemian scored another three-pointer ending the match 58-57 for Abbasi.

The result of the match gave Abbasi the lead in the first round in which nine teams competed.

In the first match of the final round Homentmen play Gazet Hashem and Abbasi play Yarmouk Amman. The four teams then play Thursday and the championship ends Sunday May 23, when former First Division teams — Abbasi and Homentmen clash once again for the title and a return to the First Division.

## Courier, Ivanisevic in Italian Open final

ROME (Agencies) — Jim Courier did his part to set up a dream final. Pete Sampras didn't.

Sampras and Courier, ranked No. 1 and No. 2 in the world, were seeded to meet in the first All-American final in the 50-year history of the Italian Open.

Courier, the defending champion, kept his appointment with a 6-2, 6-7 (2-7), 6-0 semifinal victory Saturday over sixth-seeded Michael Chang. But Sampras, the No. 1 seed, was eliminated by No. 4 Goran Ivanisevic 7-6 (7-4), 6-2.

Courier, who reached his fifth final of the year, will try to become the first player to win consecutive Italian Open titles since Jaroslav Drobný in 1950-51. Sunday's final at the Foro Italico will be best-of-five sets.

Sampras had not lost a set going into the semifinals, but he ran into a player who has beaten him regularly on all surfaces.

Ivanisevic's victory Saturday was his fifth in six career matches against Sampras.

"I really like to play him," the Croatian left-hander said. "I have a game he doesn't like. Also, he doesn't like to play lefties."

Ivanisevic punished Sampras with his huge serve, recording 13 aces and 15 service winners. He had three service games with two aces and, in one game, he hit three straight aces.

"I felt kind of helpless trying to return his serve," Sampras said.

"Acing you two or three times a game is kind of discouraging."

The match lasted only one hour and 15 minutes, with not a single game going to deuce. The two were even until the tiebreaker when Ivanisevic gained the upper hand with two aces and two service winners.

The match was essentially over after the Croatian broke Sampras in the second game of the final set. From then on, Sampras

appeared dejected and failed to mount a serious challenge.

"Once I lost that first set, I got down a little bit on myself," Sampras said. "My head was dropping down and I was playing with low energy. I got a bit tentative and impatient. He got more confident and his serve carried him through."

The victory marked a major comeback for Ivanisevic, who has been plagued by injuries and early-round losses since reaching the Wimbledon final last year. He missed a month earlier this year with a stress fracture of the foot and another three weeks with an Achilles problem.

While Ivanisevic seems to have Sampras' number, Courier has beaten Chang six straight times.

"I just seem to be winning the bigger points," he said.

Courier cruised through the first set in 41 minutes and appeared headed to a quick victory, but Chang battled back in the second set. Chang raced out to a 6-0 lead in the tiebreaker as Courier committed three unforced errors and a double fault.

Courier erased two set points before hitting a forehand wide on the third.

"I played some good points at the end of the tiebreak and it carried over to the third set," said Courier, who broke in the first game of the final set with a forehand winner and broke two more times in blanking Chang.

Chang was coming off a marathon quarterfinal victory over Andrei Chesnokov that lasted three hours and 46 minutes and ended at midnight Friday.

Chang didn't get to bed until 3 a.m. But he didn't blame fatigue for his third set meltdown.

"Actually I felt pretty good today," he said. "I played some good tennis, but he put it together today. He was really tough on the big points. I felt I



A disappointed Pete Sampras

had quite a few opportunities to win a few games in the third set and didn't convert."

Graf beats Fernandez, will face Sabatini for title: In Berlin defending champion Steffi Graf and Gabriela Sabatini needed three sets each Saturday to advance to the final of the \$750,000 German Open.

Graf, the top seed, survived a see-saw battle with Mary Joe Fernandez Saturday, rallying to outlast the American 4-6, 6-4, 6-3.

Sabatini, the No. 2 seed, beat Conchita Martinez 6-3, 4-6, 7-5, sweeping a 7-5, 6-1 loss to the Spaniard last week in the final of the Italian Open.

Fernandez, the No. 3 seed, was on the verge of beating Graf for

the first time after taking the 3-1 lead in the decisive set.

"For the first time ever (against Graf), I believed I could win," Fernandez said.

But the German suddenly gained control of her erratic forehand and rediscovered her missing serve. She won the next six games to clinch the match.

Graf is seeking her seventh title in Berlin, the site of her first international success. In 1986, the then-unknown German teenager beat Martina Navratilova in straight sets to take home the first of her titles.

She will play in her ninth final when she meets Sabatini.

The Argentine had to battle hard to overcome the fifth-seeded Martinez.

## Prairie Bayou wins Preakness

BALTIMORE (AP) — Prairie Bayou rebounded from a second-place finish in the Kentucky Derby and lived up to his billing as the pre-race favourite Saturday, outduelling Cherokee Run in a two-horse finish by a half length to win the Preakness Stakes.

Prairie Bayou broke with Cherokee Run from a pack of four at the top of stretch and slowly outlasted his rival to become the first gelding in 79 years to win the Preakness, the second leg of the U.S. Thoroughbred Triple Crown.

Sea Hero, the Kentucky Derby winner, was fifth in a field of 12 3-year-olds at Pimlico. There will be no Triple Crown winner for the 15th straight year. The final leg of the Triple Crown is the Belmont Stakes in New York June 5.

Union City broke down on the backstretch and did not finish. Prairie Bayou, the pre-race favourite in the Kentucky Derby as well, went off the favourite at



From left to right Prairie Bayou, Cherokee Run, El Baka and Personal Hope all take a turn during the 118th running of the Preakness Stakes (AFP photo)

Pimlico despite his runnerup finish in the two weeks ago. He charged down the middle of the stretch, took the lead inside the eighth pole, and beat Cherokee Run, a newcomer to the Triple Crown competition.

Prairie Bayou became the second beaten Derby favourite to win the Preakness in three years. Hansel did it in 1991.

Prairie Bayou, ridden by Mike Smith, raced the 1 3/16 miles (1,900 metres) in one minute, 56 3/5 seconds and paid \$6.40, \$3.60 and \$3.40 to win, place and show on a \$2 bet.

Cherokee Run was seven lengths in front of El Baka, who had finished 18th in the Derby. Personal Hope, fourth in the Derby, finished fourth again, another neck back, on his sunny, warm Saturday.

Sea Hero finished next, 8 1/2 lengths back of the winner.

Of Sea Hero's failure, jockey Jerry Bailey said, "he sailed in but he didn't grab hold of the bridle like he did in Kentucky.

He just wasn't there today."

While the victors celebrated in the winner's circle, a horse ambulance took Union City from the track with a compound fracture of the right front ankle. The colt was later destroyed.

"He took a bad step and unfortunately seemed to turn his right ankle," jockey Pat Valenzuela said. "He was running great, unfortunately, these accidents happen."

Completing the order of finish after Sea Hero were Woods of Windsor, Rockamundo, Wild Gale, Hegar, Kolctoo Jimmy Al and Too Wild.

## GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF  
BY TAMAR HUSCH  
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### THE MOYSIAN FIT

East-West vulnerable. East deals.

**NORTH**  
♠ K 8 5  
♥ A K 2  
♦ J 5  
♣ K 9 6 4 2

**EAST**  
♠ 10 9 6 7  
♥ J 3  
♦ J 7 3  
♣ A K Q 10 9 6

**SOUTH**  
♠ A Q 4 2  
♥ Q 10 5  
♦ 8 7 4 3  
♣ A 3

The bidding: Two of 0  
Opening lead: Two of 0  
"The power of a 4-3 fit in a major suit was espoused by the late Alphonse 'Sonny' Moysian during his days as editor of *The Bridge World*. This hand, from a recent tournament in Cress-Montana, Switzerland, is unusual in that declarer can get home by a dummy reversal in a Moysian fit!

South's one-spaids overall will be

frowned upon by purists. It did, however, propel North-South quickly to a game which could have been made.

West led a diamond and, after banking a second diamond trick, on which West discarded a heart, East shifted to the jack of trumps. Declarer must win in hand with the queen and cash the ace of trumps, which removes East's remaining trump.

After playing off the ace and king of clubs, declarer ruffs a club, returns to dummy with the king of hearts and ruffs another club, establishing a long club in dummy. Now declarer has a couple of ways to get home.

One is to cash two rounds of hearts and the king of trumps for a total of 10 tricks. With the hand counted out, however, there is an even prettier ending available. Declarer crosses to the board with the ace of hearts, cashes the king of trumps and leads the established club. West ruffs, but now must bring South's queen of hearts to life as the fulfilling trick.

Sonny would have liked the hand.

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## Arms talks set to resume this week

WASHINGTON (R) — When multilateral Middle East arms control talks resume Tuesday after an eight-month lull, one fundamental issue will still be unresolved — whether participants think controls are needed or desired.

Set to run for three days in Washington, the talks are expected to draw 25 delegations into the process launched in October 1991 at the Madrid conference on Arab-Israeli peace.

The Middle East is a major market for arms-supplying nations, including the United States, Russia and China, and all of them will be at the talks.

U.S. organisers say the main objective of this third round of talks is to rekindle momentum interrupted by the transition to a new U.S. administration after the second round in Moscow last September. The first round was held in Washington.

Now participants are familiar with arms control treaties signed by the United States and the former Soviet Union, the focus of attention will probably swing to the Middle East itself, to discuss just what needs to be addressed by any arms control plan or schemes for regional security.

"That's an evolution from the initial situation where we looked primarily at experience from other regions," one U.S. official told Reuters.

"We've gradually turned the corner and begun to discuss more directly the situation in the region and what mechanisms or arrangements could be applied there. That's significant."

But is there consensus within the group that arms control in the Middle East is a worthy goal?

"The appreciation of that is at different levels in the region... I

honestly sense nobody is resisting the idea that arms control should seriously be considered as an element of national security policy," the official said.

Weak economies throughout the region make many governments think twice about investing in military equipment, so there is more commitment to looking at arms control as a way to supplant a history of arms procurement.

"We're making good progress in developing an appreciation of arms control as a legitimate tool for national security," the U.S. official said.

However, few are willing to predict when, or if, an arms control agreement for the region might emerge.

Arms control is one of several multilateral working groups formed to complement overriding bilateral peace negotiations between Israel and the Arabs. Others focus on water supplies, refugees and economics.

The latest round of bilateral talks ended in Washington last Thursday without a hoped-for agreement on the principles of Palestinian self-rule or a firm date of resume.

At the arms control talks, the United States, Russia and China will be joined by Israel, Jordan, Egypt, the Gulf Cooperation Council states, the European Community, Canada, Japan and India.

Palestinians will attend for the first time because of an Israeli agreement to allow Palestinians outside the West Bank and Gaza Strip to join the multilateral groups.

Syria and Lebanon, which boycotted other multilateral sessions, have declined to attend the arms control group as they await more progress in bilateral talks with Israel.

## Petra refutes Egyptian newspaper's allegation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The official Jordan News Agency, Petra, Sunday refuted an allegation published in an Egyptian newspaper to the effect that Jordan had a hand in the cancellation of Iraqi 25-dinar bills. Petra described the report as baseless and totally false.

The political editor of Petra, who was not identified by name, said a report in Al Jumhuriyah newspaper, written by editor in chief Mahfouz Ansari, alleged that the invalidation of the Iraqi currency came as a result of a plot concocted by King Hussein and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

The report, published on May 13, went on to say that a large amount of 25-dinar bills had been printed outside Iraq and widely circulated in the northern regions of the country. It claimed that this move led later to an agreement between the two leaders to contain the situation by declaring the invalidation of the 25-dinar bills and the closure of the borders to prevent these bills from entering Iraq.

"The Al Jumhuriyah allegations fall within the context of the hostile and unjust campaign that was current during the Gulf crisis and financed by those groups which bear deep grudge against Jordan for its refusal to compromise the Arab Nation's values, traditions and honour," Petra said.

"We were not surprised by the attitude of the Egyptian paper's editor, Mahfouz Al Ansari, but we were surprised by this kind of falsification of events that serve

as a futile attempt at smearing the national stand of the King, his government and people."

"The Kingdom, which has adhered to national standards, is used to such onslaughts by certain forces, writers and other organs who in the past sought to end the catastrophe that befell the Arab Nation and further dismember the Arab World through rekindling internal strife," the commentary said.

"The previous attacks on Jordan, Petra added, "bad led only to further support for the Jordanian position once the dust had settled and the truth emerged with the full facts."

The Petra editor said that Jordan's policy over the past decades reflected "the country's total adherence in word and deed, to the principles of mutual respect and respect of other countries' economic, cultural and political stands and non-interference in the internal affairs of any other country."

He said Jordan had always been "oriented against occupation, racial discrimination, and persecution, and it supported the rights of all people to freedom, democracy, peace and independence and opposed the use of force and violence to settle disputes."

When the Gulf crisis broke out, Petra added, "Jordan adopted a clear national stand in support of an Arab solution to the crisis."

"This national stand won the support the Arab masses who considered it as the right policy for inter-Arab relations," it said.

## JPA decries Al Safir closure

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Press Association (JPA) Sunday voiced its condemnation of a decision by the Lebanese government to close Al Safir newspaper.

In cables sent to President of the Lebanese Press Association Mohammed Al Bualbaki, President of the Lebanese Editors Association Milhem Karam, Al Safir owner Talal Salzman and Chief Editor Munir Sulman, JPA President Suleiman Al Qudab and the association's board said they were following with concern "the unjust campaign against the newspaper with the objective of silencing words, burying the truth and placing constraints on the

role of the press in defending the cause of the homeland and the nation."

Mr. Qudab and the JPA board expressed support for Al Safir, saying the decision to close it harms democratic norms in Lebanon.

"The Lebanese press have for years remained a living model for a free, responsible and democratic press... and the recent measure taken against Al Safir newspaper is but an attempt to conceal the truth, and an attempt to direct the press with the aim of carrying out blackout projects and schemes targeting the nation," they said in the cables.

## Brotherhood seeks release of 15

(Continued from page 1)

He said the Brotherhood believes those people were detained for questioning on the kind of work they did in Pakistan. And while his group does not object to the investigation, he said, the Brotherhood sees no reason for their detention.

"They could have been allowed to go home and then summoned for questioning. There is no need for detaining them," he asserted.

A statement issued by the bloc Sunday said other issues discussed in the meeting included "harassment" to Jordanians upon

travelling to and from the country as well as to people who belong to political parties.

Mr. Khreizat said the bloc presented the prime minister with names of people who were barred at the airport, including a University of Jordan professor who is a member of the Islamic Action Front (IAF).

The statement said the bloc presented the prime minister with a memorandum detailing the Brotherhood's views on a number of issues pertaining to public freedoms and the democratic process.



**KING MEETS CLERGY:** His Majesty King Hussein Sunday received at the Royal Court a delegation representing the Greek Orthodox community in Jordan and occupied Jerusalem. The delegation, led by Patriarch Theodoros I, congratulated the King on the 40th anniversary of the assumption of his constitutional powers and presented a gift to him on the occasion. King Hussein thanked the delegation for their warm feelings and congratulations. The audience was attended by the Royal Court Chief Khalid Al Karaki (Petra photo)

## First batch of Palestinian police force trainees expected here soon

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A batch of trainees for a proposed Palestinian police force in the occupied territories as part of interim self-government arrangements is expected to arrive here this week, informed sources said Sunday.

The sources could not confirm an Israeli newspaper report that a group of 24 Palestinians had been given permission by the occupation authorities to travel to Jordan Sunday or Monday.

"Trainees are expected here this week to acquire skills in law enforcement and crowd control," said a Palestinian source. "The number of the force is as yet undetermined," added the source, who preferred anonymity.

The source denied reports that some of the trainees were already in Jordan.

Jordanian officials have confirmed that the government was approached by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) with a request to train the proposed police force and that Amman had granted the request.

The initial number of trainees is expected to be around 30 under the Jordanian approval, granted three weeks ago, according to the sources.

No senior Jordanian official was immediately available for comment.

According to a report Sunday in the Israeli daily Maariv, the first batch of 24 would be trained as officers in the police force. The paper claimed the men were all members of the mainstream Fatah faction of the PLO and had been imprisoned by the occupation authorities for resistance activities.

The newspaper, quoting Palestinian and Israeli sources, said 37 Fatah supporters had undergone similar training in Egypt and 17 more were being trained in Jordan.

Israel's Environment Minister Yossi Sarid, a member of the Citizens Rights Movement which is part of the left Meretz bloc, was quoted as neither denying nor confirming the report but said that parts of it corresponded to recent Israeli cabinet decisions.

"The government has announced a number of times that if the Palestinians want to do preparation work in Egypt or in Jordan towards estab-

lishing a strong local police force, that is fine with the government," Mr. Sarid was quoted as saying by Reuters.

"Of course this police force can be established only when there is a (peace agreement)," he said.

Israel tabled its offer to allow the creation of a Palestinian police force with limited authority during the ninth round of peace talks which adjourned in Washington last week. The Palestinians accepted the idea in principle, but were reportedly seeking larger powers for the force, which will be in control of internal security during a three-year self-rule arrangement to be worked out with the Israelis.

The proposed force will have jurisdiction only over the Palestinians living in the occupied territories, according to the Israeli proposal, which has yet to be formally accepted by the Palestinians.

The Israeli proposal also stipulates that the Israeli army will be directly in charge of issues related to the 130,000 or so Jewish settlers in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

## Jordan's press law more progressive

(Continued from page 1)

"The law only codifies what is being actually practiced in Jordan," said a senior official.

"There is not going to be any dramatic shift in the government's approach to the press," added the official, noting that government interference in newspapers has been extremely rare since the introduction of the democratisation process in 1989.

A cursory look at the state of affairs of the print media in the Gulf and in North Africa appears to support the government's argument that the new law in itself is unprecedented in the Arab World as it institutionalises press freedoms, according to supporters of the law.

In general, Gulf newspapers invariably tow the government line and steer clear of any criticism of the executive authority, they say. A few instances of exception were reported in Kuwait, which has a semi-elected parliament, but the Kuwaiti regulations empower the regime to adopt whatever act it sees fit against journalists and the press establishment.

Investigative reports are almost non-existent in the Gulf press, and government-appointed officials directly or indirectly supervise most newspapers in the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia.

Reports of government corruption and mismanagement have surfaced recently in the Kuwaiti press, but that did not happen anywhere else in the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Even before the Gulf crisis erupted in August 1990, which led to severe strains in relations between Jordan and the Gulf states, no Jordanian newspaper was allowed to be freely circulated in the Gulf. Today, they are totally banned — more because of their own criticism of officials and evaluation of local issues in Jordan — which the Gulf regimes fear will set a "bad" example for their own press — rather than any criticism of the Gulf regimes, observers and Jordanian journalists say.

In Egypt, three government-controlled newspapers, Al Akbar, Al Ahram and Al Jumhuriya, dominate the print media scene. All are headed by strong pro-regime figures who often use the papers to propagate

the government's policies under the supervision of officials appointed by the Shura Council.

Five opposition newspapers have limited circulation and mostly preach to the already converted since their subscribers are party loyalists. They adopt a fairly fair approach to truth and objectivity as long as it suits their party lines, according to observers of the Egyptian scene.

Leftist papers get into trouble often, particularly when it comes to criticism. The editor of Al Ahsali was recently imprisoned for two years for carrying a report on official corruption around the court of Saudi Arabia's King Fahd.

The Saudis ousted Cairo by removing the editor-in-chief of the English-language Arab News when it carried an article which criticised Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

In North Africa, the situation in Algeria is particularly interesting where the press is under tight control after three years of free-wheeling.

Algeria's press, long used to a one-party, one-paper system, burst out into the open in 1989 after the government of President Chadli Benjedid launched a liberalisation programme. Several dailies started publishing, serving the interests of opposition to the extent that the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), the dominant fundamentalist group, was on the verge of an overwhelming victory in general elections in 1991 when the military felt it could not accept the course of events.

As a result, the elections were cancelled. President Benjedid was forced to resign, and the FIS was outlawed. Today, one year into a running violent conflict with the Islamic militants, the military-backed Algerian regime has effectively muzzled the press.

In Syria, there are no independent papers and the government uses the media, including the main two dailies, Al Thawra and Tishreen, to express its own views and opinions.

Lebanon once enjoyed one of the most liberal media in the Arab World, but a recent episode involving the leftist Al Safir daily casts doubt on the course of the Lebanese print media under the government of businessman-turned-Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri.

Al Safir was ordered closed for a week for publishing what the

government described as a "sensitive document" presented by the Israeli during peace talks in Washington. The daily now faces legal proceedings.

Like in Syria, all newspapers are also owned and controlled directly by the government in Iraq. One exception perhaps is Babel, which is run by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son, Uday, but the daily is seen more as serving the regime's interests to criticise the officialdom than upholding the sacred ethics of objective reporting and commentary.

In Sudan, the four major publications remain strictly under the control of the military government of Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir, who took power in June 1990 after the ouster of an elected government and banned all political parties and their publications.

Needless to say, none of the four — including two run by the armed forces — carries any report or article critical of the regime.

A promise by Gen. Bashir to allow private organisations, not individuals, to publish newspapers remains unfulfilled, with little hope in the horizon for any non-government papers to appear.

The situation in Libya is not much different. A series of reports by the official Tripoli media of policies of Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi sparked excitement one year ago, but it appeared since then that the episode was orchestrated by the regime to project itself as democratic.

Even tighter rules govern the press in Morocco, where one of the main taboos for the paper is human rights. There is a lively opposition media, but they live in perpetual fear of stepping on the toes of the ruling circles.

Elsewhere in the Arab Maghreb, Mauritania and Djibouti do not tolerate any form of dissent, let alone public criticism. Chaotic Somalia has a free press, publishing daily tabloids on photocopyers, but then the country does not have a government, and all indications are that Islamists are poised to impose their rigid code on the country's political system.

Yemen, across the Red Sea at the tip of the Arabian Peninsula, is slowly following the footsteps of Jordan with an emerging tolerance for dissenting views after multi-party elections last month.

## Gulf Arabs want to correct Yemeni ties

ABU DHABI (R) — Gulf Arabs who were angered by Yemen's sympathy with Iraq during the Gulf war appear ready to allow the country gradually back into their fold, Arab diplomatic sources said Sunday.

Gulf Arab states boycotted Yemen during the crisis for voting against a U.N. Security Council resolution which allowed a U.S.-led military alliance to use force against Iraq. But they are now showing new readiness to deal with Sanaa.

"Everywhere in the Gulf the atmosphere appears to be improving for Yemen," a well-placed Arab diplomat said. "After all, unlike Sudan and Jordan, they are neighbours in the Arabian Peninsula."

Diplomats see the reconciliation as vital for President Ali Abdullah Saleh's efforts to pull Yemen out of a severe economic recession caused by the boycott.

The UAE and Saudi Arabia responded favourably this week to Yemeni efforts to mend the rift.

UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, who in December called for turning a new leaf in inter-Arab ties, Wednesday called for a fresh start in relations with Sanaa.

In a letter to Yemeni President Saleh, Sheikh Zayed said it was necessary to "close the past chapter and proceed with spirit of tolerance."

On Tuesday, Saudi Arabia's Education Minister Abdul Aziz Al Abdullah, heading a team to Sanaa for border talks with Yemen, told reporters he would deliver a letter to Mr. Saleh from King Fahd on bilateral relations.

Saudi Arabia and Yemen have for several months been negotiating a settlement of their dispute over a potentially oil-rich border area. Both say they are committed to a peaceful resolution.

The Saudi message was a further indication ties could be on the

mend, diplomats said.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who helped form the anti-Iraq Arab alliance during the Gulf crisis, discussed efforts to reconcile Arab states during his current tour of Gulf states which ended Sunday.

But diplomats said the willingness to forgive Yemen did not extend to whom the Gulf states saw as Iraq's other supporters.

They said efforts, led by Morocco's King Hassan, to convene an Arab summit appeared to be going nowhere because Gulf Arab leaders would not sit in the same room as Iraq's Saddam Hussein.

"There is improvement with one or two states," Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Mousa told Reuters Friday while visiting Abu Dhabi.

"There are still difficulties in the path of total Arab reconciliation," he added.

Yemen's new parliamentary speaker said Sunday ties with other Arab states were on the mend and called for extra effort to narrow a rift created by the Gulf crisis.

"Things are starting to return to normal and the door between us and our (Gulf) neighbours has been opened," said Sheikh Hussein Al Ahmar. He was elected, on Saturday to preside over Yemen's new 301-seat parliament, the first to emerge from multi-party elections.

Pro-Saudi Ahmar, leader of the large Islamic opposition Yemen Gathering for Reform (YGR) party, told a news conference: "We shall all work to overcome what has happened during the Gulf crisis."

The election of Mr. Ahmar was a concession to the Islamists by the two parties that ruled North and South Yemen before the country reunited in 1990. The two parties have agreed to merge, giving them an absolute majority in the new assembly.

## Iraqi request to maintain its aircraft turned down

AMMAN (Petra) — Iraqi Minister of Transport and Communications Abdul Sattar Al Maini said Sunday the United Nations had turned down an Iraqi request to assemble all its civil aircraft, now in a number of airports, in a neighbouring country to make the necessary maintenance for them.

In an interview with the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Maini said Iraq had 37 aircraft parked in Arab airports, including 27 in Iran, four in Tunisia and six in Jordan.

He said Iraq also had 18 ships anchored at Arab and foreign ports.

Mr. Maini said the rejection by the U.N. of the Iraqi request will not make it possible for Iraq, even if the embargo is lifted, to fly these planes because of lack of proper maintenance.

"This means that Iraq will lose billions of dollars," he said.

He said his government reserved the right to claim compensation for the loss.

Mr. Maini said Iraq had made contacts through diplomatic

channels with the U.N. and international humanitarian organisations to use its planes for transporting medicine and foodstuffs for Iraq or to assemble these planes and ships in any neighbouring Arab country but was denied permission.

The Iraqi request was made in New York last month by the head of Iraqi Airways.

Iraq sent its 22 Russian-built and 15 American-made civil aircraft to foreign airports just before the 1991 Gulf war.

Commenting on the meeting of the General Assembly of the Joint Iraqi-Jordanian Land Transport Company, which was held here Saturday, Mr. Maini said the assembly discussed the company's financial situation, financial accounts and its general budget for the year 1992 and the estimated 1993 budget as well as the company's statute. He said Jordan and Iraq were interested in developing the company and expanding its activities.

## Kuwait says 12 'Bush plot' accused face death

KUWAIT (Agencies) — Twelve alleged Iraqi agents could face the death penalty for allegedly planning to kill George Bush here last month, Kuwaiti prosecutors said Sunday.

Attorney General Mohammed al Banai said a news conference the 11 Iraqi and one Kuwaiti were accused 16 people arrested on suspicion of involvement in an alleged plot to blow up the former U.S. president on his April 14-16 visit.

U.S. Congressmen have urged military action against Iraq if official Baghdad backing for the alleged plot is proved.

Mr. Banai said he had filed various charges against 14 of the 16 Sunday. Ten faced a charge of plotting to assassinate Mr. Bush and two faced a charge of being an accomplice to the plot. Both crimes were punishable by death, he said.

Of the remainder, two had been charged with providing shelter for some of the 12 without knowing their intentions.

A further two were to be charged with smuggling alcohol and their case would be tried separately.

Charges of attempting to assassinate Mr. Bush were filed against a 17th person, an Iraqi, who was still at large, Mr. Banai said.

"The investigations proved beyond any doubt that the Iraqi intelligence apparatus motivated that rotten lot of defendants to implement the plans of the Iraqi regime," Mr. Banai said in a statement distributed to reporters.

Iraq has denied that it was involved in such a plot and accused the United States and Kuwait of laying the groundwork for a new military strike against it.

Mr. Banai said the plan was to detonate a car bomb near the building where Mr. Bush received an honorary degree. If that failed, he said, Wali Al Ghazali, 36, an Iraqi, planned to strap explosives around his waist and blow himself up, along with Mr. Bush.

Kuwaiti authorities arrested what it calls an "Iraqi sabotage net" on April 14, the day Mr. Bush arrived on a three-day visit. He is revered in Kuwait for leading the 32-nation coalition that liberated the emirate from a seven-month Iraqi occupation on Feb. 26, 1991.

A team U.S. Secret Service agents interrogated the suspects, Mr. Banai said.

President Saddam Hussein's half-brother, Barzan Ibrahim Al Tikriti, wrote in a Baghdad newspaper Sunday that Iraq's enemies continue to plot against it because they have failed to break Iraq and break the spirit and mentality of its people.

Mr. Tikriti, writing in the Al Jumhuriyah daily, said the allies could do no more than they have done already.

"Yes martyrs will fall among us, but they will be replaced by other heroes, and any new aggression will orphan some children and will widow some women, but Iraq will remain lofty," he wrote in an article carried by the Iraqi News Agency.

## COLUMN

### Australian released in jail mixup back in custody

SYDNEY (R) — A convicted rapist released from prison 10 months early because of bureaucratic bungles was apprehended after police were tipped off to his whereabouts by executives of a Sydney newspaper. Graham Jack Walker, 44, had refused to return to jail when the mistake was discovered. Police had requested that he turn himself in but until Friday, 12 days after his release, they had no power to detain him because he had broken no laws. In a television interview earlier, Mr. Walker had threatened to shoot it out with police rather than go back behind bars. The Sydney Morning Herald reported Saturday that Mr. Walker was recaptured in a taxi north of Sydney while he was on his way to meet one of the newspaper's reporters. The Herald said newspaper executives had informed the police of the meeting following legal advice. Police said Mr. Walker would be held until a court decided whether or not he should be returned to jail.

### Chaplin mementos sold off

GENEVA (AP) — A violin Charlie Chaplin is said to have played in the 1916 silent film The Vagabond fetched 48,000 Swiss francs (\$33,000) at an auction of the great comedian's memorabilia, held despite a protest by his children. The fiddle, modified for a left-handed player, was among 461 lots, ranging from bow ties and a silk pajama to hand-written pages of a film manuscript, that sold for a total of 220,000 francs (\$152,000). The violin's buyer identified himself only as a collector from Algeria. A dark blue suit Chaplin wore at a 1952 reception by Queen Elizabeth II was bought for 18,000 francs (\$12,400) by Frans Billeen, a Belgian car dealer. Four lots of handwritten pages from the scenario for a film Chaplin never made, "The Freak," found unidentified buyers for a total of 33,100 francs (\$22,800). The movie, on which Chaplin worked from the 1960s until his death, was to have starred his daughter Victoria. Chaplin's eight children voiced disgust at the sale of dozens of wardrobe items by his Italian housekeeper, Mirella Canese.

### Elvis's guitar fetches \$151,700 at auction

LONDON (R) — A guitar used by Elvis Presley to record some of his earliest hits was sold for \$99,000 (\$151,700) at auction. The 1942 Martin D-18 acoustic guitar, billed by auctioneers as "the guitar which started Elvis Presley into the king of rock and roll," was bought by American music boss Michael Malone who flew to Britain for the sale. "This is the holy grail of rock and roll," Mr. Malone, 48, from Seattle said. His company AEI produces music for airlines and shops and he already owns a guitar which belonged to Beatles star John Lennon and another owned by Bill Haley. A Christie's spokesman said: "We are absolutely overjoyed. There has been great interest from collectors around the world and the price achieved justified our enthusiasm for it." The guitar had been expected to fetch more than £100,000 (\$153,000). The two songs which set Presley on the road to stardom — "That's All Right Mama" and "Blue Moon of Kentucky" — were recorded with the instrument under the legendary Sun label in July 1954. Both became local hits in Memphis, Tennessee.

### Rare Rembrandt printing plates return to Amsterdam

AMSTERDAM (R) — Five copper printing plates etched by Rembrandt are returning to the 17th century Dutch master's home city, the Rembrandt Museum said. The Rembrandtists — where the artist lived and worked in his most creative years — and two other Amsterdam museums recently bought the rare plates from the heirs of a U.S. art collector for a total amount of 540,000 guilders (\$290,000). Up to now only one of Rembrandt's etched plates, owned by a private collector, has been in Dutch hands. "The plates are in surprisingly good condition and have lost almost nothing of their authenticity," the Rembrandtists said. The museum, which specialises in Rembrandt prints, said it was delighted to have made such an important addition to its collection. All five plates will be exhibited at the Rembrandtists from May 20 to July 11.